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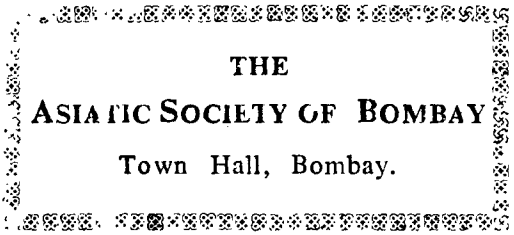

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LONDON AT THE END OF THE CENTURY

A Book of Gossip

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ac.

BY

ARTHUR W. À BECKETT

AUTHOR OF

"THE MODERN ADAM," "GREENROOM RESTRICTIONS,"
"THE MEMBER FOR ROTTENBOROUGH," ETC

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TO

SIR WALTER BESANT

THE MODERN HISTORIAN OF LONDON

THIS BOOK OF GOSSIP

CONCERNING THE GREAT METROPOLIS

AND ITS RESIDENTS

AT THE END OF THE CENTURY

IS DEDICATED AS A MARK OF ESTEEM

BY HIS FRIEND

THE AUTHOR

PREFACE.

THIS little volume pretends to be no more than "a book of gossip." I have attempted, as a Londoner following a career necessitating the playing of many parts, to give some sketches of the Great Metropolis, as I know it at the end of the Century. I can scarcely claim for my work that it is very deep, but I trust that it may be read by those who honour me with their attention with interest. I have tried to give a picture of London and Londoners as they exist. Here and there I have travelled with my fellow citizens out of town. When I have done this it has been "under doctor's orders," or when London has been holiday making far away from home, on the festivals of St. Lubbock.

My ambition has been limited to the production of a book that may be read by those who have an idle hour to spare for cheerful recollections, and, to use the old phrase, by those who are anxious to "acquire information combined with amusement."

"London at the End of the Century" is a title full of possibilities. In my hands it has become the name of a book that has afforded me infinite pleasure to write; I only hope that I shall be able to share that pleasure with my readers.

ARTHUR W. À BECKETT.

Garrick Club,
Yuletide, 1899-1900.

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LONDON AT THE END OF THE CENTURY.

CHAPTER I.

THE POSITION OF THE PRESS.

WHAT perhaps will strike an intelligent foreigner—and every foreigner who visits the metropolis is considered intelligent—on his entrance to London at the end of the century, will be the hoardings and their placards. He will find these records of the time of very great merit in many directions, for now-a-days our bill-posting has frequently the artistic assistance of eminent supporters of the Royal Academy. He will learn that the modern Babylon has numberless theatres, hotels, and newspapers. If he has visited the old ground before—say twenty years ago, for so important an incident as a journey to England is not to be undertaken too frequently—he will notice that what were once units have become scores. If he is standing opposite the advertisement

station in front of the Hotel Cecil, he will only have to right-about turn and take a diagonal march into the Adelphi theatre to see in the saloon of that popular place of entertainment a painting of a hoarding by the late John Parry, bearing the artist's signature, dated 1844. Comparing the actuality with the canvas, he will readily understand the enormous progress that has been made during the last fifty years. At the time when the famous entertainer, who found a successor in the late Corney Grain, was singing for a livelihood and using his palette as a distraction, railway travelling was in its babyhood, and marine excursions chiefly represented by a very primitive steam boat, built by the General Steam Navigation Company, and bound for Margate. A few weekly papers suggested that journalism was also in its infancy. In 1844 we had no *Daily Telegraph; The Illustrated London News* existed, but its present pictorial contemporaries had to be created. During the century which has come to its last days I have played many parts; civil servant, barrister, private secretary, playwright, and novelist; but the chief rôle that I have filled since the years closed over my boyhood has been journalistic. Under these circumstances it is not unnatural that, when writing of London at the end of the century, Fleet Street, and all that Fleet Street means to a pressman, should first attract my attention.

"JUPITER" OF PRINTING HOUSE SQUARE.

It rejoices my heart to find that *The Times* retains a foremost rank in the list of London daily papers. I say this because my father, the late Gilbert Abbott à Beckett, metropolitan police magistrate and man of letters, was, so far as I know, and I have seen the assertion also made by a writer not of our blood, the only man who ever wrote the entire series of leaders in one morning issue of Printing House Square. It came about in this way. My father had an agreement with *The Times* to write a daily article. One of these contributions had been crowded out, and stood over to appear with the copy supplied by him in due course on the following day. At the last moment a subject, of which he had a special knowledge, came to the front—I fancy it was connected with the Andover Union, an institution visited by my father as a poor law commissioner—and consequently the duty of supplying a commentary fell to him. I have a dim recollection of a "printers' devil" waiting in the hall of Hyde Park Gate while my father scribbled sheet after sheet, and then hearing the front door slam as the little messenger started away on his return journey. Thus it was that the three leading articles of *The Times* on

the following morning came from the same pen. This incident, which is naturally interesting to myself, is yet instructive to others, as it marks the change in the modus operandi of conducting a large daily paper. At the present time a contributor would probably be in telephonic communication with the office, and dictate from his study the copy intended for the composing room many miles away. One of my friends, who is head of the reporting staff in the Gallery of the House of Commons during the Session, habitually uses this means of communication when sending the summary of the night's doings from Westminster to Bouverie Street. This improvement is one of scores that have been introduced during the last thirty or forty years by the proprietors of *The Times*, who were the first to adopt the wonderful machinery that supplies newspapers by thousands in the same time that once was occupied in turning out a fortieth of the number. The motto of the paper in the early forties was "the best," and that motto has seen no change for half a century.

"THE STANDARD" AND ITS PARTNER.

It would be invidious to single out for special commendation any particular paper, when all are of admirable quality. Perhaps I may be pardoned for referring to *The Standard*, which still retains its

prestige, as an old contributor of thirty years ago. In 1870-71 I had the honour of serving as a special correspondent during the Franco-German war, on the banks of the Rhine, and wherever else I could find a French prisoner. *The Standard* may be, I think, considered the pioneer of cheap journalism. In the old days there were two editions, practically the same paper, one called *The Herald*, and the other *The Standard*. The first has higher priced than the second, which was intended to suit the pockets of the poor or economical. *Punch* used to call the two journals *Mrs. Gamp* and *Mrs. Harris*, from the two characters in Dickens's novel. It will be remembered that *Mrs. Harris* was the echo of *Mrs. Gamp*. Years after the absorption of *The Herald* in *The Standard*, my editor, Captain Hamber, in giving me my final instructions said:—

"Look here; as your copy may be tampered with by the Prussians, you had better address the envelope with an assumed name."

"What shall it be?" I asked.

"Why not resume your acquaintance with *Punch's* friend, and write to me at Shoe Lane, as Mrs. Harris?"

And I adopted this suggestion.

It was fortunate that I did, for I "got through" a piece of news that never reached town by wire—the story of an attempted escape at Coblenz.

CONCERNING "THE MORNING POST."

Although every daily paper at the end of the century has its "Society paragraph," *The Morning Post* is certainly the journal of journals associated with that august body once known as the "upper ten thousand," and now describable as the "moneyed half million." Its change in price from threepence to a penny was an experiment that was watched with the deepest interest in Fleet Street. It marked an importent event in social history. *The Morning Post* has, during the last sixty or seventy years, been regarded as the organ of the aristocracy, and by the change in its price has brought economy into fashion. Two or three decades ago a duke, much less a duchess, would never have thought of riding in an omnibus. At the present time some of the 'busses have the most distinguished *clientèle.* In the fifties it was thought the thing to keep up appearances to any extent. Lord Lytton, in his comedy of "Money," showed a spendthrift, impecunious baronet paying a man about town a small salary to call him "Stingy Jack," to conceal the emptiness of his coffers. To-day it is quite the mode to talk of one's poverty. Another remarkable thing connected with the change of price in *The Morning Post* is that, in spite of the reduction, the paper was never better edited. It is

as full as of yore of all that goes to make a London daily the finest journal in the world.

STATE RECOGNITION OF JOURNALISM.

Leaving *The Times* out of the question as a paper that insists upon the ultra dignity of the Press, as an abstract rather than as a profession, *The Daily Telegraph* tnd *The Morning Post* have done more than any other papers to raise the status of a journalist. The proprietors of these distinguished broadsheets, by putting themselves at the heads of such bodies as the Newspaper Society and the Institute of Journalists, have obtained that recognition of which the helmet of the baronet or the coronet of the peer are a testimony. *The Daily Telegraph* can claim to have introduced the essayist as distinguishable from the reporter into journalism. The rigid lines of the gentleman who counted his remuneration by the copper coins of the realm were elaborated into decorative as well as descriptive sentences. The "young lions of Peterborough Court" taught a senior generation that the public loved their (the lions') roaring better than the more peaceful cooings (concoctions of paragraphs, old style) of the past. Nay, more, *The Daily Telegraph*, joining hands with *The New York Herald*, undertook enterprises that were shunned, or at any rate overlooked, by the Govern-

ment. The "*D. T.*" discovered Livingstone and Emin Pasha, and, as I write, is on the eve of surveying the still unknown Africa from Egypt to the Cape. It has been the first to lead a crusade in the cause of charity, or in the recognition of those who have deserved well of their country. All honour to *The Daily Telegraph* and those responsible for its management.

THE ORIGIN OF "THE DAILY NEWS."

For the sake of "Auld Lang Syne" I have always taken an interest in *The Daily News*. It was started by the proprietors when the expiring century had scarcely reached middle age. It was associated with Dickens and Douglas Jerrold, and *The Express*, edited by my old and valued friend, Sir John Robinson, in the early fifties, had for one of its contributors my father, then writing for *The Morning Herald* and *The Illustrated London News*. To this day its connection with *Punch* is unbroken, for my friend, Mr. H. W. Lucy, contributes articles anent Parliament for both papers—"Pictures for the *News*, and "Essence" for the "*Charivari*." Again, the editorial offices in Bouverie Street face one another, and in Pressland the claims of neighbourhood are recognised. Writing as a *Punch* man, I pray that the pleasant *entente cordiale* may long continue.

"THE CHRONICLE" UP TO DATE.

The Daily Chronicle has a remarkable and distinguished record. Earlier in the century it was known by the name of a district. Then *The Morning Chronicle*, after struggling as the organ of a foreign potentate, virtually ceased to exist. Then *The Clerkenwell News*, eminently successful as a local, blossomed forth into an equally successful London daily, under the title of *The Daily Chronicle*. It has flourished from the first. If it has any fault, it can be found in its politics. But I may be wrong, the more especially as my sympathies are enlisted with the other side. But from a journalistic point of view the paper is first rate. And this opinion of mine—not offered after the fashion of Sir Hubert Stanley—is endorsed in the most practicable manner imaginable by the public.

PICTURES TO THE FRONT.

Perhaps the most striking feature of the end of the century in connection with the Press, is the growth of illustration. Until the establishment of *The Illustrated London News*, the metropolis had no paper relying more upon pictures than letterpress for its popularity. *The Observer* and *The Sunday Times* —survivors of the fittest—had numerous sketches of

striking events from time to time, in the earlier years of the Queen's reign, but news, rather than the illustration thereof, was their speciality. Nowadays both papers to which I have referred have dropped the pencil for the pen. No doubt photography. and the rapidity with which engraving can, in these later days, be accomplished, have had much to do with the development of the limner's art in its relation to daily publications. *The Daily Graphic* was to thousands a revelation, and has stimulated many of its contemporaries to increased exertion in the direction of pictoral reproduction. Printers' ink passes over, with gratifying results, not only type, but blocks. This would have been impossible half a century ago. Thanks to modern improvements, when the writer can be assisted by the artist in daily journalism the work of both is available.

THE GROWTH OF THE EVENING PAPER.

Another remarkable development of the Press at the end of the century is the growth of the evening paper. In the sixties I had the honour to edit *The Glowworm*, which made its appearance in the same year as, but a little earlier than, *The Pall Mall Gazette.* We modelled our publication on Paris originals. We gave the lists of the plays of the moment, after the fashion of *The Entr'acte* and a

feuilleton. Even in those days I soon discovered the value of "latest sporting," and did my best to outdo the accounts of races published in the last edition of *The Evening Standard*. There were in existence *The Evening Star* (the afternoon version of the organ of John Bright), *The Globe* (then, as now, an admirable paper), and *The Express*, issuing from the offices of *The Daily News*. I thought myself particularly "smart" in my salad days, because I managed to get my second edition—we had no first—into the hands of the public shortly after two o'clock. Nowadays half-a-dozen evening papers are selling long before that hour. *The Pall Mall Gazette* (now edited by my old and valued friend, Sir Douglas Straight, one of my colleagues on *The Glowworm*) soon followed, describing itself as "a Review," as well as an evening paper. I remember that we *Glowworms* considered ourselves extremely clever because we referred to the *P.M.G.* as "our sporting contemporary." Then came *The Echo* (I had used the title earlier for a weekly *rechauffé* of *The Glowworm*), and, later still, *The St. James's* and *The Westminster*. As I write, *Evening News* and *Evening Stars* compete at a halfpenny with their higher-priced contemporaries. When *The Glowworm*—a four-paged sheet—was started, it was considered a marvel of cheapness at a penny, and *The Pall Mall Gazette* (smaller than at present) most reasonable at twice the money.

CHEAP JOURNALISM.

And the above consideration brings me once again to the subject of cheap journalism. The abolition of stamps on advertisements and the paper duty no doubt paved the way to the success of our low-priced daily periodicals. We can give more for the money than of yore, and the School Board has sent us a sufficiency of readers. And this sufficiency is enough to supply the demand of all the proprietors. The *Daily Mail*, *The Morning Leader*, and *The Morning Herald* have their supporters, without trenching on the ground occupied by *The Times*, *Post*, *Telegraph*, *News*, *Chronicle*, *Standard* and *Advertiser*. The more the merrier. And here I must refer to that marvel of cheapness, *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper*, a publication that has been admirably conducted for half a century. I have to thank its proprietors for allowing me to reproduce some of my writings in its columns anent Parliament. Papers increase in numbers, and paper readers keep pace with the production. So an enterviewed publisher told me the other day, and I believed him.

THE PRESS AS A PROFESSION.

Looking at the condition of writers for the Press in London at the end of the century, a Press man

can feel only satisfaction. Forty or fifty years ago the saying went that "journalism was good for a walking-stick, but not as a crutch." A man was a barrister first and a journalist afterwards. Leader writing and reviewing paid the rent of chambers, while Briefless was waiting to prove his surname to be a misnomer. But you find the gentlemen of the long robe who have embraced journalism as a profession, keeping their names up in Lincoln's Inn and the Temple to avoid serving on juries, and not with any serious intention of obtaining clients amongst solicitors. And as for the tone of the Press, it is beyond reproach. A short while since certain accusations were made against newspaper writers that they preferred pecuniary profit to professional honour. The matter was taken up by a sub-committee of the London District of the Institute of Journalists, with the gratifying result that not a single member of the Institute could be found to have betrayed his trust. For it is a trust that the journalists hold. They are the guardians of the nation's honour. One is not expected to be very serious while compiling "a book of gossip," but yet I cannot refrain from expressing my delight that my father was a journalist, and that I have followed the same calling. There is nothing in the condition of London journalism at the close of the century which stultifies the time-honoured title of "gentlemen of the Press."

CHAPTER II.

STRANGERS IN LONDON.

IT has taken quite fifty years to forget the impression created by John Leech, of "Mossoo." In 1851 it was considered a picture of an actuality to show a group of French Counts regarding with astonishment a wash-hand-stand ewer. "What is this strange machine?" asked foreign nobleman No. 1. "I do not know," was the reply of his friend. This was the general idea of typical Continental conversation in the year of the Great Exhibition, and I am afraid that even now, when we have come to the end of the nineteenth century, amongst the mob the same notion prevails.

SOHO AND LEICESTER SQUARE.

The headquarters of the Grand Nation is still situated within view of those rival places of entertainment—the Empire and the Alhambra. In the north-

east corner of Leicester Square stands *Notre Dame de France*, the national church of the French colony, where all religious functions connected with the history of our lively neighbours are celebrated. Before this place of worship was established the building was used for Burford's Panorama. To this day, those who remember the pictures of Switzerland can trace the ancient form. Where once was seen the Lake of Lucerne, now stands an altar, and the summit of the Righi is replaced by the portrait of a saint. Within a dozen yards of the church is the Empire, which, when it was first opened, also contained a panorama. Under the superintendence of the late Alfred Thompson a realistic representation of the battle of Balaclava was shown. In the foreground were some dummy lancers and broken drums. On one occasion the effect was somewhat spoiled by an old gentleman, one of the public, who had paid his shilling for admission, getting over the barrier to search for his dropped umbrella amongst the warlike débris.

WAR SONGS PAST AND PRESENT.

At right angles to the Empire stands the Alhambra, which was opened as the Panopticon, a feeble, unsuccessful rival to that vanished home of science—the Royal Polytechnic Institution. In 1870-71, when

the Franco-German war was raging, the British public were wont to enter the Alhambra regularly to cheer the Marseillaise and to hoot the Wacht am Rhein. Only a short while ago, at the commencement of our war with the Boers, the same British public, a generation younger, marched on to the same site (for the Alhambra had been burnt and rebuilt in the interim) to sing "Rule Britannia." In 1871 I remember meeting, on the stage of Covent Garden, Hervé, the celebrated French composer. I condoled with him on the triumph of the German arms. "Ah," said he, with tears in his voice, "we shall be avenged—by our children!"

The prophecy has not yet been fulfilled. Nearly thirty years have passed since Paris was occupied by the Prussians and still the German flag waves over Metz. Possibly peace may come with the Twentieth Century.

THE FOREIGNER AT HOME IN TOWN.

So much, or perhaps so little, for Leicester Square. In spite of the fine new roads piercing the slums of Soho, the humbler portion of the French colony still haunts the well-beloved locality. But the Gauls do not have it all their own way. For their neighbours they have a strong Swiss contingent, and even a detachment from the main body of Italians occupying Hatton Garden. As for the aristocracy of the

foreign residents settled in London, they are merged in Britons of the same class dwelling in Pall Mall and Mayfair. A French, German, or Italian gentleman can always secure election at the St. James's in Piccadilly, or partake of the hospitality of the Service clubs, where foreign military and naval attachés are eligible for honorary membership.

THE AMERICAN COLONY.

But there is one race of men born outside Britain which we Englishmen can never regard as aliens. They are of the same blood as ourselves, and for a thousand years had the same history. When a foreigner ventures to put up for a West End club he must personally be very popular to secure the faintest chance of election. When a citizen of the United States seeks admission, his nationality is a recommendation. The Garrick, the Beefsteak, the Union and the Wyndham are full of our American cousins, and if they are seldom found in the Carlton or the Reform, it is because participation in national politics at those clubs is a necessary qualification. At the recent banquet in honour of Her Majesty's eightieth birthday, our American cousins took a part as representatives of England's senior colony. Not long ago I had the pleasure of conversing with Mr. Maxim, of quick-firing fame. When we discussed the relative

positions of England and the United States, I ventured to tell him that I considered his part of the territory on the other side of the Atlantic was a branch establishment of the Mother Country, of which she had every reason to be proud. Mr. Maxim agreed with me. One of the pleasantest signs of the times at the end of the centruy is the hearty good-feeling that happily exists between the two great divisions of the English-speaking race.

PROVINCIALS, COLONIALS, AND ORIENTALS.

Years ago cattle-show week was an institution of far greater importance than it is at the present moment. The week in which it was held was considered by the theatrical proprietor and the lessees of the music halls as the carnival of the country cousin. Even at the close of the century, a large contingent of rosy-cheeked young men, wearing pot hats and leather gaiters, visit London at the end of October and in early November. But, thanks to the railways and their cheap excursions, provincials have grown so accustomed to our manners and customs that they nowadays attract little attention. The country bumpkin of old-fashioned melodrama is played out, at any rate, in the metropolis. Of late years nearly every county has its London dinner, whereat all the provincials settled in town enjoy a

banquet and eloquence of a more or less excellent order. We have the festival of the Devonians in London, and the East Anglians in London, and many others. Taking the journalists belonging to the metropolitan district of the Institute, I believe country is in the majority to town. Indeed, it has occurred to me that if I wished to establish my name as an organizer, I could adopt no better course than founding a dinner to be exclusively reserved for Londoners in London. I believe that if I were to make the attempt, my chief difficulty would be to find sufficient *convives* possessing the necessary qualification. Until a provincial speaks it is difficult to distinguish him from a Londoner, but when he talks his accent betrays him. Strictly speaking, your true Londoner should be born within sound of Bow Bells, but this test will remain obsolete until the belfry of the famous City church has been sufficiently repaired to allow of the ringing of the chimes.

ANCIENT AND MODERN.

The ancient landmarks have almost disappeared. Speaking personally, I myself was under the impression that I first saw the light, or maybe the fog, in North End, Fulham, but a recent map of the locality which contained the house in which I was born, proves to me that there was a mis-

take in the matter. According to this chart, I must have commenced the earliest days of my career in West Kensington. What were Brompton and Hammersmith 20 or 30 years ago, are now really the south-western portion of the London postal district. But this matters little to our visitors. To them Town is always Town. Go where you will, you find the provincials all the year round, and besides them, colonists from Canada, Australia, and Southern Africa. They are mostly white, but India and the Gold Coast send us many swarthy fellow subjects. These last are to be found in large numbers at the Inns of Court. They chiefly adopt the Inner Temple, but some of them prefer Gray's Inn, that forensic hostelry that has, of late years, risen by leaps and bounds into popularity. Taking the four guardians protecting the portals of the Royal Courts of Justice, Gray's Inn is becoming one of the most numerous in students, as it has ever been the most famous in history. I speak of it absolutely without bias. My father belonged to Gray's Inn. So do I.

In conclusion, taking the stranger in London as we find him, and considering his position from every point of view, I think we may affirm, with a considerable amount of confidence in the reasonableness of our assumption, that given health, plenty of money, and a cheerful disposition, he has a thoroughly good time of it.

CHAPTER III.

RELIGION IN LONDON.

PERHAPS nothing strikes a Londoner with greater force than the altered tone about the manner of spending Sunday in town which marks the end of the century. It was Charles Dickens who first called attention to the dismal view that some very worthy people adopted relative to what they were pleased to call "the Sabbath." London, in spite of its vast population, is distinctly "religious." I use the word in its broadest sense. We have little of that "philosophy" which in Paris means "infidelity." Certainly here and there we find a *poseur* who delights in proclaiming his contempt for things divine, but the bulk of sensible men regard him with as much esteem as that accorded to the gentleman who took pleasure in speaking disrespectfully of the Equator. A stroll through the streets between twelve and one on a Sunday will show the promenader all sorts and conditions of

men coming from church and chapel. And if the afternoon and evening are spent in recreation away from the tavern, why none should be the worse. After all, it is only reverting to the eighteenth century, when many a country parson took part in a game of cricket on the village green. So, without entering into the vexed question of sacred music (or otherwise) in our halls and public buildings, I will give a rapid glance at Sunday as we find it in London at the end of the nineteenth century.

THE FOUNDERS OF THE ORATORIO.

The reference to music on the first day of the week brings me naturally to that product of the followers of St. Philip Neri, the oratorio. The good Italian priest founded his oratory in Florence centuries ago, and, thanks to Cardinal Newman and Father Faber, branch establishments have appeared in Birmingham and London since 1850. To the casual Londoner the Brompton Oratory is a magnificent church used frequently during the season for—as the papers have it—"fashionable weddings." But the excellent Fathers have duties other than presiding at nuptials of the blue blood of Catholic Society. The Fathers have "Little Brothers," who, on the first day of the week, meet together for pleasant chat and chess and other innocent distractions. On the Feast of St. Ce-

cilia there is an oratorio held in their own private chapel, at which the best music is performed, to the delight of the audience, or should I say—for a sermon is a part of the proceedings—the congregation? What that excellent institution the Y.M.C.A. is to non-Catholics the Little Brothers of the Oratory are to members of the Church of Rome. And here I may call attention to the change of tone that has taken place during the last thirty years anent the question of "'Version." I have in my mind as I write the case of a youngster of sixteen, whose religious belief altered in the early sixties. His career had been marked out for him. A great friend of his dead father was a titled stockbroker, who had most kindly promised the lad a seat in his counting-house with a junior partnership in the future. The moment the news reached the City that the boy had 'Verted the kind offer was withdrawn. The elder brother of the youngster suggested as a mode of "knocking the nonsense" out of him, turning him into the workhouse, and, as a matter of fact, penniless and without food, the young gentleman had to seek a breakfast, the outcome of hospitable benevolence. At the end of this century such a case would be impossible. Now-a-days a religious belief is regarded with as much tolerance as opinions anent politics. A man is allowed to follow the teachings of the Archbishop of Canterbury, or Cardinal Vaughan, or Dr. Parker, or the Rev. Price Hughes, as the spirit

moves him. So long as he is a good fellow, which is another term for a gentleman in its right sense, it matters little to the vast majority whether he be Anglican, Catholic, or Dissenter. The old feeling of hatred and all uncharitableness which, perhaps, was a legacy from the times of the Puritans, and later on the Jacobites, has disappeared, and London is the better for it.

LONDON CHURCHGOERS.

In spite of the exceptions to whom I have referred the bulk of Londoners are churchgoers. In the country for years it has been considered the thing to do to go to the family pew, as an example to the simple villagers. Besides, the Rector would feel naturally annoyed if the Squire were absent. The meetings at the Sessions, the dinner-table, and even, perhaps, the covertside, would be slightly embarrassing if the Hall neglected the Pulpit's sermons. And what has been long the rule in the country has become the custom in town. There are very few churches west of the site of Temple Bar that have not crowded congregations. Many of the temples of the Establishment have as many services as the Catholic churches and chapels, and at each service (especially at the Catholic) in the morning there is a new set of worshippers. From statistics it would seem that the influence of

the Church is holding its own. Every day amongst the intellectual there is a call. Without becoming serious people are more and more in earnest. It was no mean compliment to a land where a church is by law established that a Pope should testify to the national righteousness, and yet so it has been. There is a spirit of conciliation abroad, in spite of differences of opinion upon such weighty matters as the burning of incense and the use of daylight candles.

RELIGIOUS "ARMIES."

The end of the century sees in existence two wonderful organisations—the Church Army and the Salvation Army. It has been the fashion to laugh at the latter and "the General" who commands it. Now and again I have come across some of his officers, and certainly, from what I have gathered from them, I cannot speak of the movement with disrespect. No doubt the music of the Salvationists in the streets is not always tuneful, and, to put it quite straight, frequently a nuisance. And there may be a lurking danger that the excitement created by long prayer meetings may lead to lunacy, as it did, I have been told, amongst the revivalists in America. But taking the Salvation Army as a whole, I believe that it has been the cause of a maximum of good and a minimum of evil. And I say this as a Christian who

belongs to a creed which differs materially with the tenets held by the General.

And here I may point out that the Salvation Army is no new thing. Those who have read Macaulay's essays dealing with the Reformation will find that the preaching monk was quite as much in earnest as the Fire and Iron captain.

TWO LEADERS OF RELIGIOUS THOUGHT.

In "a book of gossip" it may appear out of place to take a sedate view of life, and life in London on a Sunday is at its sedatest. So I will touch very lightly upon what is known as the Nonconformist Conscience. It has been my good fortune to come across a large number of divines, from Cardinal Manning at one end of the list to the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon at the other. I take these two good and great men because they have left us, and the language of eulogy is saved the possible reproach of being flattery by the sad barrier of the grave.

The first time I met Cardinal Manning was when he was living at York Place, and then was an archbishop and not a member of the Sacred College. I had come to him at the request of the proprietor of a paper to see if he would purchase the copyright. I shall never forget the interview. Dr. Manning was kindness itself, and, in spite of the natural inclination

to chaff a lad—I was little more than a lad in those days—who had come upon an absurd errand, refrained from the temptation. My paper was devoted to the Turf in a great degree, and yet it was my duty in the interests of the needy proprietor to show a way to utilising it as a so-called "religious" journal. I suggested to His Eminence (that was to be) that to the races might be added "sermons." "My dear young friend," said Dr. Manning with a smile, "does it not seem to you that there is something slightly incongruous in the juxtaposition of Latest Sporting with Latest Ecclesiastical?"

And there did.

Many a time afterwards I met Cardinal Manning, and he not unfrequently referred to the occasion when I tried to induce him to become the proprietor of the *Glowworm*. He was one of the kindest and best of men.

Both Cardinal Manning and Mr. Spurgeon were very fond of a joke. The last time I saw the latter was on a Sunday some months before his death, when I was induced, in company with a High Church Anglican clergyman, to pay a visit to the Tabernacle to hear the reverend gentleman preach. We found the place crowded, and, at the suggestion of one of the attendants, tried our luck at a door in the rear of the premises. We found that we had come upon the private entrance reserved for pastors. Our names were

taken in to Mr. Spurgeon, who was conducting the service. He came out and gave us both a hearty welcome. In the course of a few minutes we found ourselves seated on a sofa in the pulpit. A gentleman was reading out the verse of a hymn, and when he had finished he turned round to us and courteously invited us to lead the singing. This was slightly embarrassing to my clerical friend, because his costume was markedly ecclesiastical, and to me because my voice is not very strong and has never been exhaustively cultivated. Besides, I was not quite certain that the sentiment of the hymn had, from a purely theological point of view, my whole-hearted approval. However, the congregation, which numbered some thousands, managed, so far as we were able to judge, to get on very comfortably without our assistance. After the hymn came Mr. Spurgeon's address, which was full of light and shade, by turns witty and solemn, and always interesting. We had a short chat with Mr. Spurgeon after the service was over, when the genial pastor suggested to my High Church friend that, although it would be scarcely fair for him in any of his discourses to adopt any of his jokes, he was quite at liberty to use his controversial arguments.

THE POSITION OF THE JEWS.

As I am referring particularly to leaders of religious thought in this chapter, it may not be out of place at

this point to make a passing allusion to the position held by the Jews at the close of the century in the estimation of their fellow Londoners. Thanks to their kindness of heart to their countrymen of British nationality and their patriotism, they have long since ceased to be regarded as a race apart. "The Merchant of Venice," which in the last century was regarded as a comedy, so far as the principal character was concerned, at the present time is accepted in the same relationship as a tragedy. The wrongs of Shylock are no longer received with shouts of derisive laughter, but even with tears, and when Sir Henry Irving quits the stage in his gaberdine, bowed down with the cruel insults of the victorious Christian, the exit is greeted with keenly sympathetic applause. It seems strange to us nowadays that the Jews should have been forbidden entrance to the House of Commons, when some of the most respected members of the House of Lords at this moment belong to the same persuasion. At the clubs there are now no religious disabilities, and some of our most popular chief magistrates in the City have been supporters of the synagogues. Some of our greatest philanthropists have also been Jews, and one of the soundest lawyers of modern times, a Hebrew by birth and faith, added by his honoured presence to the illustrious traditions of the British judicial bench.

CHAPTER IV.

A PEEP INTO STAGELAND.

SINCE Dickens wrote of Mr. and Mrs. Crummles and their interesting company the position of the actor has greatly improved. According to the statute, not so very many years ago, the player was a rogue and a vagabond. Nowadays a famous tragedian or comedian may expect a knighthood as a proper recognition of his services in the cause of art. Not only this, the stage is becoming one of the professions. Young men from the universities find the A.D.C. and the O.U.D.C. stepping stones to the boards of the London theatres. No longer is the adoption of the mask and the buskin, or rather their modern equivalents, considered *infra dig.* by those superior persons who are pleased to believe that they belong to the "best society." Ladies and gentlemen of birth and breeding are ready to appear before the footlights without concealing their identity by assuming *nommes de*

théâtre. On the other hand, dramatic authors, who in the early part of the century were described on the programmes as "esquires," now appear without their titles. The Church and the Stage have joined hands, and both claim the right of delivering sermons. In a word, play-acting has become, in the eyes of the right minded, absolutely respectable. This is as it should be. It seems to me that if one day of the week is given up to the pulpit, there can be no possible harm in devoting the other six to instruction more or less combined with amusement. It is a solid fact that, at length, London has playhouses in numbers bearing some proportion to the total of its inhabitants. Within the last eighteen months not only have theatres sprung into being in the heart of the metropolis, but in almost every suburb included in the postal district. And, taken all round, the entertainment provided has been of first-rate quality. The work of the Lord Chamberlain's Examiner has not been unpleasant. The public may be tired of "problems," but they act as their own censors and will not tolerate pieces defying official condemnation. Even "the *jeunesse* stage doory" has become a memory of the past, and it is no longer the thing—as it was twenty years ago—to visit the theatres a score of times successively to gaze upon the charms of the *ballet.* Our young men nowadays spell Art with a capital vowel, and prefer the cultured talk of the

Savile to the not always grammatical *causerie* of behind the scenes.

FIRST NIGHTS AT THE PLAY.

First nights are now amongst the most prominent events of the season. Thanks to Sir Henry Irving and Mr. Charles Wyndham, a gathering on the seamy side of the curtain is more than a collection of movers in smart society. All London on a first night at the Lyceum foregathers to congratulate the hero and heroine of the evening. "Chicken and champagne" is there, but it is not there for the special delectation of the critics. Those useful framers of public opinion have to hurry off to Fleet Street to write their notices, and have no leisure to accept the graceful hospitality of the actor-managers. The actor of to-day receives his applause as does the eminent Q.C. who listens to the appreciation of his colleagues in the robing room. The liberty of the Press is unthreatened, for it is clearly understood that there is a hard and fast line dividing friendship from duty. A critic is a judge first and a *bon camarade* afterwards. This is a novel situation for the end of the century. This foregathering of friends lays that spirit of spite that disfigured so many of the *critiques* of the forties and fifties. Charles Kean—Etonian and man of culture—suffered severely from this malevolence. It was the

order of the day in more than one office to slate the tragedian with the "snuffle" and the "nose of strange device." But nowadays a critic would as soon think of criticising unfairly, unjustly, the rhetoric of the Royal Courts of Justice as the elocution of our leading theatres. I think Sir Henry Irving has written of the typical actor as Punch, and claimed indulgence for that unrespected puppet. But his remarks referred to the days when Punch was found at the corner of the streets. Nowadays both the dramatic and the literary puppet are absolutely respectable, and both wear well-fitting evening suits inclusive of spotless white waistcoats.

PLAYHOUSES, OLD AND NEW.

Looking at the list of theatres at the end of the century it is instructive to note that most of the senior playhouses have retained the speciality of fifty years ago. The Lyceum is still the home of romantic drama, Drury Lane and the Adelphi of melodrama, the St. James and the Haymarket of comedy. The merry little Strand with its memories of Byron and Burnand, and, earlier still, of Talford and Albert Smith, is rather uncertain in the tone of its entertainment. Of the new theatres three or four are given over to the charms of what of old was known as the burletta. It is strange that with so many

musical pieces going in all directions a national opera cannot be established. But so it is. Professor Stanford has recently appealed to the public and the County Council to subsidise such an institution, but hitherto without success. The days of Pyne and Harrison are over, and Carl Rosa is becoming a memory of the past.

Covent Garden survives as the solitary opera house. The home of music where Jenny Lind made her London *début*, and Sims Reeves sang in English, no longer exists. Her Majesty's is now a theatre, not an opera house. On the 24th of May, 1899, however, the Queen on her eightieth birthday heard the national anthem sung on the site of the boards where Piccolomini warbled the death melodies of "La Traviata." I believe I may take the credit of filling the theatre, on the occasion to which I refer, with the children of the State. The scholars of the Duke of York's School and the Greenwich Hospital School were there, with many others. At half-past two o'clock the children wished their Queen many happy returns of the day, and Her Majesty listened to the greeting at Windsor. The telephone carried the voices from the theatre to the Castle. I believe that it was the first time that a monarch had listened to an address from her subjects at a distance of forty miles.

PROGRESS BEFORE AND BEHIND THE CURTAIN.

At the end of the century the insurance companies might well lessen their charges for playhouses, as theatres are infinitely safer than they were only a decade ago. The substitution of the electric light for gas and the regulations of the Lord Chamberlain's Office may have had something to do with this welcome change. Looking through the papers in 1899-1900 one seldom reads of a temple of the drama destroyed by fire. Not so long ago it was a standing line of the contents bill. The new theatres are so built that they are isolated. The Shaftesbury, for instance, has a road on every side, and like precautions are being taken in the theatres now in course of construction. Besides this, the new century sees improvements on either side of "the rag," or to give it its full dress title, the proscenium curtain. The luxurious lounges of the stalls nowadays find their way into the pit and even into the front rows of the gallery. The marble of the restaurants invades the auditoriums of the theatres. Behind the scenes the arrangements are excellent. Stages can be sunk and all sorts of new contrivances lessen the labour of the carpenters. The dressing rooms of the company, that a score of years ago would have been a disgrace as box rooms of fifth-rate charity schools, now have

many of the comforts of the best hotels. Even the greenroom is brighter and in better taste than it was in the days of yore. Now that authors (following the precedent set by Dion Boucicault and Tom Robertson) have become their own stage managers, there is less of the "My dearing" that used to shock the susceptibilities of novices transferred to Bohemia from Mayfair. The familiarity that breeds contempt has all but disappeared, and the talk at a rehearsal is not unlike the conversation of a drawing room in common form.

THE PROFESSION AT THE CLOSE OF THE CENTURY.

In conclusion, the earnings have improved all round. The author gets heavier fees, and the proprietor finds no difficulty in working at a profit. Less than fifty years ago theatrical property spelt want if not bankruptcy. Webster, Buckstone and Vining died in poor circumstances. Then Sir Squire Bancroft and his clever wife, who will always be remembered by old play-goers as Marie Wilton, seemed to break the spell. The Bancrofts were succeeded by the Kendals and John Hare. Then Sir Augustus Harris did very well. Of late years nearly all theatres have been open and thriving. Whether the actor's calling is always to be desired is subject to debate. Not long ago I met an old friend who

before adopting the stage as a profession had served in the army. He had been a good-looking fellow with the manners of a gentleman. With these recommendations to back him he had been engaged over and over again for "juvenile lead."

"What do you think of the stage as a profession?" I asked.

"It would be well enough if it were not for the 'resting.' Here have I been out of an engagement for two years. I may go home to night and find an engagement open to me, giving me ten or fifteen pounds a week for a twelvemonth. But then I may not. I may have to continue indefinitely resting."

"Then you don't consider the stage lucrative?"

"On the whole, I think, from a financial point of view, sweeping a crossing is safer. But then, of course, play-acting is very often pleasanter."

And the speaker was a man who held a foremost place in the ranks of the profession.

CHAPTER V.

PARLIAMENT UP TO DATE.

BECAUSE someone called the House of Commons, in a moment of inspiration, "the best club in London," the idea has gone abroad that the life of the representative of the people is one of luxurious ease. The fact that a seat in Parliament never (or scarcely ever) goes a-begging, has no doubt done much to confirm the impression. There is a magic in the letters "M.P." that is particularly attractive to a vast number of men. To a barrister in good practice with an ambition to change the wig of the advocate for the tonsured coiffure of the judge, the position is necessary. As no Lord Mayor of London can occupy the Mansion House without having served the office of Sheriff, so a Q.C. must have worked for his party before he can hope for the chief seat on the Bench. Of course, he may not have succeeded in passing the bar protected by the Serjeant-at-Arms, but at any

rate, he must have made the attempt. In such a case as this he will find promotion in India or the Colonies, if there be no available appointment in the Mother Country. Then, of course, a Member of Parliament has special claims to the attention of the company promoter. A board of directors can never be considered perfect unless one or two of its members can carry the glamour of the House into the homes of the readers of prospectuses. But, after all, those who materially benefit from their position in St. Stephen's are comparatively few. The vast majority of the chosen of the electors enter the House for "the honour and glory of the thing." It may be well to show the seamy side of the picture, and prove (as an Irish member might observe) that even those of the colleagues of Sir Wilfrid Lawson who do not share that hon. baronet's objection to stimulants, are presumably unable to obtain "cakes and ale"; in short, the "luxurious ease" of rumour may be translated into the "terribly hard work" of fact.

THE WORK OF THE HOUSE.

"Idle!" exclaimed an hon. friend of mine who had been a member in a couple of Parliaments; "I only wish I could be, but the whips and my constituents keep me well to my work. Unless I gave satisfaction to both I should not retain my seat at the next

election." I suggested that since the establishment of the close at midnight rule, the labour of our legislators was less than of old. ." Not at all," was his reply. "We do not (except on occasions) keep such late hours as we used to do, but then there is a great deal more to be done outside the House, in the committee rooms. No, take my word for it, there is no busier man in the world than a Member of Parliament desirous of retaining the confidence of his constituents. Of course, if he does not intend standing at the next election, he can take it easily, but in that case he must be prepared to run the gauntlet. On the whole, it would be better to secure the stewardship of the 'Chiltern Hundreds,' rather than challenge the criticism of the party and his particular portion of the electorate."

A MEMBER'S MORNING.

Further conversation suggested to me the idea of putting myself (in my mind's eye) in his place. I assume that I am a Member of Parliament resident in London at the end of the century.

It is eight in the morning, and I have to get through my duties. I glance at the Orders in the newspapers to see if there is anything in them of particular interest to my constituents. If there is, I must make it a point to be in my place ready to

speak, if I can but "catch the Speaker's eye." And here I may remark that the operation is not so simple as it sounds. I have known it require hints to the whips and chats with the first commoner himself. If you desire to address the House you must let your wish be known. The task of selection rests with the occupant of the chair, but his decisions are greatly influenced by the advice of the organizers of the contending parties, and the personal qualifications of the would-be orator. If the oration concerns questions of a technical character, a specialist will be considered to have special claims on the attention of the House. The evidence of experts is always held in reverence at St. Stephen's, but it may be days before a private member can obtain his opportunity. A friend of mine, although supported by the influence of the whips and the good will of the Speaker, had to wait on one occasion through four sittings before his time arrived. He had to be continually in his place on the chance of the chapter of accidents giving him an earlier hearing. At the fourth sitting it was intimated to him that Mr. Speaker considered that he had deserved well of his constituents, and earned his reward; this confession was followed shortly afterwards by the eagerly anticipated capture of the eye. And then he was able to air his eloquence in the presence of a house thinned by the dinner hour.

AN M.P.'S CORRESPONDENCE.

I will assume that I am fairly free for this day, at least. I have no measure associated particularly with my name "on the carpet," and have only my ordinary correspondence. If my constituency is an important one, I have some fifty or a hundred letters to answer daily. If my division is obscure, I shall still have about a dozen, and each of these epistles must be read and studied and carefully answered. If I had any claims to the title of a "public man," I must have a private secretary to assist me. But in this event I must use discretion. My other self must only reply to comparative outsiders. If I instruct him to answer the wrong people, I may get myself into trouble. Constituents are usually "touchy," and the reputation for the lack of courtesy is frequently the precursor of a sad dearth of votes. Then I must consider the advisability of using "House paper," in lieu of my own. If my correspondent is in any sense a personal friend, it is better to reply from my private address. If he who writes is only a casual acquaintance or one of the public, I should let my note be headed with "House of Commons" in embossed characters; the latter superscription conveys the impression that the writer is, so to speak, tied chronically by the leg to Westminster.

I find that my "answers to correspondents" take,

at the very least, a couple of hours, and now I have to fix in my social engagements.

I assume that as a speaker in the House I have been a failure, and am, therefore, not much in request at public meetings. Under such circumstances, I shall be free to attend committees, and I may be sure that my availability (if I may be permitted to use the word) will not be ignored by those in authority.

IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM.

The House opens for the reception of the People's representatives at an early hour in the morning, and many members take their breakfast in the coffee-room. No doubt I shall have discussed the matutinal meal at home, so that I have only to drop into the library or the smoking-room. In these two apartments I shall find any number of my colleagues acting (with the assistance of the stamped stationery) as the living encyclopædias of their constituents. Having got through my letter-writing before leaving home, I shall only have to find my way to that committee room in which it will be my fate to breathe until I am released by the chairman at four o'clock to give my services in another place. Most of the committee chambers run on the upper floor along the river front, but since the removal of the Law Courts from Westminster Hall to the Strand,

there are also apartments devoted to the consideration of Private Bills, besides the "big room of Rufus." It is in the councils appointed by the House that a member really works. Every M.P. is obliged to belong to one or more committees. His only escape is to be a Member of the Government, and then he will not avoid being appointed to the chairmanship of some special committee or other. The ordinary member during the Session serves, on the average, four days a week on these councils. If he shirks his work, he is reported to the Speaker, and then there are what the French call "*Reclamations.*"

As important interests are at stake, five form a quorum for a private committee, and if that number is not maintained, the expense incurred by those interested, of course, goes for nothing; so it stands to reason that unless the appointed committee men keep a house, there must be a good deal of outside discontent, and outside discontent is the one thing that representatives of the people regard with genuine apprehension. Once in a committee room, the member is bound to stay, as he acts for the day as one of the judges whose duty it is to inquire into the merits or demerits of the scheme undergoing investigation. In some cases there is absolute hardship, as refreshments are not allowed to be served in the rooms during the holdings of certain committees. In cases such as these, the fate of the

member is not unlike that of the jury locked in to consider a difficult verdict. He must neither eat nor drink till he has done his duty. Besides the Private Bill Committees, there are the Grand Committees of Law and Trade, to which nearly every-one belongs. In these assemblies 40 form a quorum. (The number required, too, for keeping a house).

In special committees every constituent is expected to question the witnesses, and, therefore, has to be up in its subjects. If by chance the member should be chairman, then he has to be the chief inquisitor. However, the secretary (one of the clerks of the House) will do his best to get a proof from which the witness can be examined. Sometimes, when a committee is ordered which is expected to be popular "outside," there is quite a rush for places, and then those responsible for its selection have to use a great deal of tact and discrimination. The proceedings of such a committee are reported to the newspapers, and the member consequently obtains the honour and glory of unlimited publicity. But the vast majority of councils do their work in silence and neglect, and seldom are rendered famous by the conductors of the Press.

"WHO GOES HOME?"

I will take for granted that until three or four o'clock I have nobly performed my duty in the

committee rooms, and am now at liberty to occupy my customary seat in the House. For hours I still sit patiently waiting my opportunity to speak or to vote. Very frequently I shall receive a summons in the outer lobby. A card will have been sent to me (it usually takes about three-quarters of an hour to get from the hands of the sender to those of its intended recipient) requesting my attendance without. A police constable will assist me in the discovery of my visitor. As a country member I shall be less troubled than if I represented a London division. It is on record that, during a single night's sitting, a metropolitan M.P. was "called for" no less than eighty times by the electors who had assisted at his triumph. The hours will crawl on until the hands of the clock point to midnight; then, asked by the attendants the question, "Who goes home?" I shall retire to my dwelling (humble or otherwise) and rest until the new day brings with it fresh labours.

And having written thus far, I feel that I have scarcely done full justice to my theme; there are scores of other duties that have escaped me that a representative has to perform. To be popular, he must have the strength of a giant, the intelligence of a sage, and the patience and kind-heartedness of a saint.

CHAPTER VI.

A NIGHT IN THE HOUSE.

A LITTLE before three o'clock a couple of attendants stroll in to see that all is in order. Two large prayer books are placed on the table, and a couple of foot-stools appear before them. These aids to devotion are for the use of the Speaker and the Chaplain. Some dozen members—more or less—take up their places on the comfortable green leathered lounges that appear on either side of the canopied chair reserved for the use of the first commoner in England. The Reporters' Gallery is vacant, because strangers are not admitted until prayers are over. It is presumed that M.P.'s prefer to pray for themselves, and resent assistance from without. The Ladies' Gallery is filled with occupants, dimly seen through the bars that were placed in position many years ago to keep wives from threatening their titular lords and masters. As Big Ben strikes three, Mr. Speaker and the

Chaplain enter in procession, and the former stands in front of his chair, with the latter to the left of him. The members present remove their hats, stand up, and turn with their faces to the wall. Then, at the invitation of Mr. Speaker, the Chaplain reads three prayers—two of them (those for Her Majesty and the Prince and Princess of Wales, and the rest of the Royal family) are in the Book of Common Prayer—and the third is special to the place and the occasion. The legislators give up some five minutes to their devotions, and then the members face about, sit down, and resume their hats, while the Chaplain retires gracefully, saluting the Speaker as he backs into the lobby.

AFTER PRAYERS.

The clerks in their wigs and gowns take their places at the table, from which the huge tomes have been removed. The Speaker mounts his throne, and the Serjeant-at-Arms places the mace in position, opposite the clerks, and divided from them by works of reference and a three-minutes' hour-glass. The clock under the Strangers' Gallery marks a quarter past three, and "private business" is disposed of. At this moment the House seems to be, so to speak, in its dressing-gown or morning slippers. Certainly, Mr. Speaker is as dignified as ever, but the front bench

on his right, reserved later on for Ministers, is occupied by all sorts and conditions of non-official members. The Government is not particularly interested in "private business," as a rule, and courtesy takes the place of opposition. About half an hour is devoted to this kind of work, and then comes the formula of presenting petitions. The representative of a constituency briefly describes the purport of the appealing document with which he has been entrusted, and then walks to either side of the table and drops it into an open carpet bag of truly pantomimic dimensions. The petition is taken as read.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Now arrives the moment for playing one of the most amusing and sometimes instructive games of the House—questioning and answering. On the unbound, unstitched sheets of paper containing the programme of the business of the sitting, that each member has received on entering, appears a number of queries that have to be set at rest by the heads of the Government. One evening no less than eleven pages out of sixteen were devoted to these interrogations. They numbered eighty-one in all, and seventeen Ministers were required to be in their places to answer them, as the following table will demonstrate:—

Chief Secretary of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland...	11
Secretary of the Admiralty.....	9
Secretary of State for the Home Department.....	8
Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.....	8
Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.....	7
President of the Local Government Board.....	6
Secretary for Scotland.....	6
Under Secretary of State for the Colonies.....	4
Secretary to the Treasury.....	4
Secretary of State for War.....	3
Civil Lord of the Admiralty.....	3
President of the Board of Agriculture.....	3
Vice-President of the Committee of the Council on Education	2
Postmaster General	2
Secretary of State for India.....	2
Mr. Attorney General.....	2
President of the Board of Trade.....	1
	81

The figures are instructive of the condition of the House of Commons at the end of the century. They show that the Irish members ask about double as many questions as their Scotch colleagues, and that the Admiralty just now is attracting three times as much attention as the War Office. It is

unnecessary to say that the interrogatories have, during the hours of the morning, been worked out in the various Government departments. The private secretaries of the Ministers are responsible for their masters' enlightenment. On the very next evening the questions amounted to only a couple of dozen, and a strange thing happened; only one member appeared to act as interrogator of a solitary demand, so twenty-three conundrums remained without solutions. Mr. Speaker goes through the list twice, calling upon the member who has to put the question by name. This proceeding affords strangers an opportunity of being acquainted with the personal characteristics of the representatives of the people. The questions (which are asked by merely mentioning their numbers) relate to all subjects, from the building of an ironclad to the salary of an Irish Government doorkeeper; from a lost postage stamp to a matter of foreign policy of the most vital importance. By about five o'clock the question game is over, and then the House fills rapidly.

BEGINNING BUSINESS.

As each member enters, he uncovers and bows to the Speaker before taking his place, and the obeisance is performed not in a perfunctory manner, but as if the representative really respected the recipient of

his salutation. Silk hats are the rule, and wide-awakes the exception. Frock coats, cut-aways, sacks and gaiters are the sartorial characteristics of the chosen of the people. The Serjeant-at-Arms (occasionally relieved by his assistant) sits to the right of and in the rear of the bar of the House, facing the Speaker. He is garbed after the fashion of the eighteenth century in sombre black cloth, with a white scabbard, sword and steel hilt resting beside him. Sometimes a member who is "a little late" in entering the House converses with this imposing official, and learns from him the latest parliamentary news. And now, all being in readiness, the most showy work of the sitting commences in real earnest. The ex-Ministers, sitting on the first bench to the left of the Speaker's chair, attack the right hon. gentlemen opposite. The subjects of the caricaturists spar and fence, using now the rapier and now the bludgeon. A "palpable hit" is followed by a roar of "Hear, hears" from the one side or the other. The Speaker rests back in his chair, with works of reference and stationery on either side of him, and looks steadily at the clock. The first commoner is ready to interpose when necessary, but for the moment has nothing better to do than to gaze at the green baize board that shields him from the too powerful glare flashing from the sunlight. The debate is carried on with more or less vigour until about

eight, when there is an adjournment for some half-hour for refreshment. Before this moment arrives the sunshine had faded from the stained glass windows, with their mottoes and devices, and the shaded light of electricity has poured down from the ceiling.

AFTER DINNER IN THE HOUSE.

On the resumption of "business," members return, some still in morning dress, and others in the regulation tail coats and white neckties of privileged West End society. Now and again there is a division. When this occurs there is a preliminary trial of strength. The question is put from the chair, and the "Ayes" shout out their approval. Then come the "Noes." "The 'ayes,' I think, 'have it,'" politely suggests Mr. Speaker. "No, no," shout those of the contrary opinion. Then the hour-glass, which has been resting between the mace and the clerks, is put into requisition. The electric bells begin to ring all over the House to summon back those who have strayed away into the library, or the dining saloons or the smoking rooms. Members flock in, and then the door is closed by the Serjeant-at-Arms, who guards it with his sheathed sword, more than ever in evidence. Tellers are named by Mr. Speaker. The members file out ("Ayes" to the right, "Noes" to the

left), to be counted. After a pause the doors are thrown open by the Serjeant-at-Arms. The four tellers advance in line, dressing from the right. They halt as they reach the table and bow together, as they hold in their hands two large sheets of paper. It looks for a moment as if they purposed commencing a glee for the special edification of Mr. Speaker. But no; all they have to record is the result of the recent division. This done, they bow again and scatter. The debate is resumed, and the flow of talk, sometimes vehement, sometimes terribly monotonous, continues. The silent members chat *sotto voce* among themselves. Notabilities flit hither and thither. Thus the proceedings continue hour by hour until the hands of the clock approach midnight. At twelve sharp comes the beginning of the end. No further contentious business is allowed. The Speaker, assisted by his clerk at the table, puts certain orders of the day. If no one objects, such a Bill is taken as read a second time, and so on and so on. The list is soon exhausted, and then the Speaker announces the adjournment of the House, and leaves his chair.

Stay, there is one more question. In the olden days, when the people's representatives had to band together to protect their lives and property from the assaults of footpads and highwaymen, they used to be called together by this last interrogatory. The cry survives, although the occasion for its use has

passed away with the invention of gas and the establishment of the modern police force. "Who goes home?" shout the attendants. The reply is practically given by the disappearance of everyone.

CHAPTER VII.

THE PREMIER CLUB OF ENGLAND.

IT may be well to consider whether the House of Commons is "the best club in London." The Palace of Westminster has many points of resemblance to the successors of the old coffee houses. You will find in it "the very best people," and some less eligible. There is not a member who has not successfully braved the terrors of the ballot box. It is true that the election is, at most, for seven years, and not for life. The more lengthy period is reserved for the occupants of "another place"; but then they are not chosen at all. Anyone can belong to the Peers—it is only a question of birth. But a member of the House of Commons has to be proposed, seconded, and elected. He enters "the best club" backed by a majority of votes. Under these circumstances, it would not be wrong to say that, of the two chambers, the lower is the more select.

"Yes, the House is fairly comfortable at the end of the century," said a friend of mine the other day. "I have been in Parliament, as you know, for the last twelve years, and think that to-day we can certainly report progress. Herbert Gladstone during his tenure of office worked wonders."

This was said to me in the strangers' coffee room. The apartment did not differ in appearance from the saloons we are accustomed to in Piccadilly or St. James's Street. The tables were laid out for four. Those nearest the windows, as usual, were most in request. Through the glass panes a charming view of the river could be obtained.

"Pretty, certainly," replied the hon. legislator who had been entertaining me, to my laudatory observation; "but St. Thomas's Hospital looks its best in the sunlight. It is less pleasing when it is only dimly visible in an approaching mist, and when we have a fog, well, the prospect is not cheerful."

In spite of the pessimistic tone in which my friend spoke, I could see that he was quite satisfied with his surroundings.

THE KITCHEN COMMITTEE.

That most important matter, the cooking of the meals of members, is entrusted to the Kitchen Committee. I must confess that I do not envy

the chairman of that hard-working body. I can fancy how he must be troubled with the equivalents to "backed bills." Not that the fare is not of the best. So far as I have been able to judge, the viands of the House are of excellent quality and admirably prepared. The tariff is certainly reasonable, perhaps (if an Irishism is excusable) too reasonable. In spite of the careful control of a very thoughtful Committee and a liberal contribution from the privy purse of the House of Commons, its coffee room has failed to pay its way. Certainly, thus far there has only been a trifling sum on the wrong side of the books, but still the fact remains that the result is loss, not profit.

COFFEE ROOM CHARGES.

Prices are not high. For 1s. 6d. a member can get for lunch a cut off the joint, vegetables, cheese, "green food," and butter, with a pint of lager beer. The House dinner is also to be commended. A member can invite his friends (of both sexes) to partake of a choice of soups, a couple of fishes, two entrées, a bird, a savoury, and a sweet. For this he has to pay 5s., while the club regulation is strictly observed ("No gratuities to the waiter"). By the way, this rule caused quite an agitation some time since amongst the "Roberts," and was very nearly the prologue

of a strike; and here I may remark that the coffee room attendants wear no livery, but are garbed (as in restaurants) in plain evening dress. I suppose were they to appear in appropriate costumes, they would be seen in scarlet coats and blue knee-breeches. My reason for this belief rests on the fact that the building in which Parliament sits is Royal property. It is called (for that reason) the Palace of Westminster; and yet, strange to say, the arms of our Kings and Queens, so conspicuous in the decorations of the exterior of the building, are rarely found in the interior. The chairs and china bear only the Portcullis. I fancy that the device points to the date when St. Stephen's passed out of the direct control of the first estate of the realm. When I make this suggestion I am prepared to learn from the Serjeant-at-Arms (a member of the Royal household) that the Palace is still under the direct control of the Crown, and that Parliament merely partakes of hospitality. The flagstaff over the Victoria Tower used to be reserved for the National Standard, run up when the Sovereign visited St. Stephen's. Of late the Union Jack floats in the air from sunrise to sunset when the House is sitting. I fancy this new departure must have obtained the Royal sanction. Certainly the fluttering of the bunting is an improvement. Why not let us have the flag all the year round?

THE COFFEE ROOMS.

There are three principal coffee rooms running flush with the House, and overlooking the terrace and the river. The centre apartment is free to strangers. A member may thereat feast his personal friends, who may, by the way, be his political foes; and here I may remark that from a club point of view the House, like the Wyndham, the Marlborough, and the Bachelors', is non-political. Of course it has its sets. For instance, there are the Unionists and the Gladstonians, the soldiers and the lawyers, the railway men and supporters of beer, but these sets only recognize their professional companionship in the House itself. At Westminster the western saloon is reserved for the heads of the Government and the Opposition. The Ministerial room has four long tables; two of them are reserved for members who have reached Cabinet rank; a couple more for the Whips and Under Secretaries on either side. Of late there has sprung into existence a fifth table, which used to be visited by such celebrities as Mr. Chamberlain and Lord James of Hereford, who used to meet thereat the Marquis of Hartington, before he became the Duke of Devonshire, and Mr. Goschen, before he accepted, with the others mentioned, positions in the Cabinet. On the west of the strangers' saloon

is what may be termed the private dining room of the private members.

Besides these apartments, there is a large vault-like chamber level with the terrace, to which ladies are admitted. A member, by giving notice, can hire this banqueting hall (which to anyone with a lively imagination is not unsuggestive of the mythical "dungeon beneath the castle moat"), and feast his guests to his heart's, more or less, content. Recently, hon. gentlemen desirous of keeping a House for some pet measure, have entertained their political friends in it. And also on this level are a tea-room, to which the fair sex can be admitted, and a smoking room for strangers. But I must confess that all the apartments flush with the terrace appear to be distinctly gloomy and better suited to coals than conversation. The advantage of the site of these rooms is the close proximity of the terrace. In the summer it is pleasant enough to sit beside the river, when the tide is high. On rare occasions, at other times, the fumes thrown off by mud baking in the sun constitute a bar to perfect enjoyment.

THE LIBRARY AND THE SMOKING ROOMS.

But perhaps the most imposing part of the House is the library. The depôt of books is divided into several rooms, all of noble dimensions. The windows

are on the river front. A casual glance at the contents of the shelves shows that the volumes have chiefly to do with the history of Parliament.

"I see you do get some new books now and again," I said to my friend, as I noticed a number of works laid out on a table.

"Yes," he replied. "Here, you see, is a recently-published life of a well-known statesman."

"No novels?"

"Not at present. Up to now we have drawn the line at biographical romances."

In one of the rooms of the library was the table of the old House, saved when its former habitation was burned to the ground. In its neighbourhood was a bust of the late Sir Erskine May, and other mementoes of the past. I noticed that the members using the library were hard at work answering letters to constituents. The stationery bearing the stamp of the House is always awe-inspiring.

Having glanced at the bath-rooms and the "barber's shop" (modern innovations, and constructed on familiar lines), I came to the members' smoking room. This was the pleasantest place in the House. It has an air of comfort absent from many other of the rooms. Mr. Gladstone once started a very sensible arrangement. Over the mantelpiece, while the House is sitting, appears an announcement (continually changing) of the business occupying the

attention of members in another (and less agreeable) place. This "affiche" might appear with advantage in all the other rooms used by members.

A SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENT.

Why not (let me ask) introduce the electrophone into the recreation rooms of the House? All that would be necessary would be an arrangement in telephones. Were this done, the debates would be heard in every part of the building. Should my suggestion be adopted, I trust that truly right hon. gentlemen will not forget the originator of the improvement.

"Now you have seen all there is to see," said my friend, who had acted as my cicerone. "The club part should be as comfortable as we can make it, for during the Session we use it morning, noon and night. We can rarely safely leave it. Some of the members come when the doors open, and do not quit the premises until warned by the cry of 'Who goes home?' that the lights are being extinguished. I wish we could get some exercise."

"There is no card-playing at St. Stephen's, is there?"

"Certainly not," my friend answered promptly. "Some of the more frivolous of us, however, occasionally revel in a game of chess."

"And how about billiards?"

"I never thought of billiards," answered my host. "Perhaps the House might entertain the suggestion. The late Pope used to play billiards."

And then my friend and I left "the best club in London."

CHAPTER VIII.

LONDONERS HOLDING HOLIDAY.

THERE can be no more impressive sight for a foreigner than when some State ceremonial collects together a crowd of Londoners to welcome Royalty. The two Jubilees, 1887 and 1897, were memorable for their grandeur and enthusiasm, but, perhaps, town is seen at its best at a popular prince's wedding. The English people are fond of marriages, and as each of the Queen's children has taken to himself or herself a wife or a husband there has been a season of rejoicing. In spite of a perfunctory discordant note from "the extreme left," the harmony has been complete. That discord has always been lost in the full volume of song that has risen from the popular chorus. But the agitation invariably comes to nothing. The agitators end by fighting for seats, and describing themselves as utterly disgusted if they are left out in the cold and see nothing of the various processions.

"MIND AND LEAVE THE BABY."

I have spoken of a "discordant note," but I do not wish such a sound to be confounded with the words of wise warning that have been written by that excellent dramatist, novelist, and man of letters, Mr. G. R. Sims. Just before the wedding of the Duke and Duchess of York a poem by "Dagonet" appeared, in which the author suggested to his friend the working man that when he (the son of toil) and "the missus" went out to see the illuminations on the happy occasion they should leave their baby behind them. I hope the words may be taken to heart when next there is a grand function, for certainly they are deserving of attention. More than a quarter of a century ago, when the Duke of York's illustrious father was married, the streets were crowded with an immense throng of holiday-makers, and there was an ugly rush at Temple Bar. The old archway, the work of Sir Christopher Wren, stood (as all the world knows) on the site now occupied by the Griffin. The Metropolitan Police were on duty in the Strand, and Fleet Street was in charge of the City constables. I fancy that the two bodies, in those distant days, did not act with the harmony that now is the characteristic of the joint performance of their important duties. Be this

as it may, the fight under the archway was something terrific. There was a stream of people coming East and a stream coming West, and the two currents met under the gloomy stones of Temple Bar. I was in the crowd myself, and it was all I could do to avoid committing infanticide. There were a number of silly women, who had brought children with them to see the sights. I do not think the motive that caused them to give their offspring such an airing was entirely unselfish. It may have been possible that the mothers found it impracticable to leave the babies at home, and consequently had brought the infants with them. Whatever may have been the cause the effect was sad in the extreme. The women, crushed and screaming, were at length showing they were not entirely devoid of maternal feeling. "Oh, save the poor child!" was the cry from many a sorrowful mother, and the appeal was disregarded. In such a crowd it was impossible to move save where the current directed, and it was as much as one could do to keep one's feet. In the narrow part of the Strand, just opposite the offices of Messrs. W. H. Smith and Sons, I frequently lost my foothold, and was at times carried by the throng. It was not a pleasant experience. My great effort was to keep my arms free, well above the surging crowd. Once find your hands helpless beside you and your chance of escaping a fall and a trample becomes a small one. Not that

the crowd was ill-natured. On the contrary, there was a general desire to be kind and considerate. The rough element was conspicuous by its absence. Here and there were five or six hobbledehoys banded together, arms upon shoulders, in single file. But their attempted "rushes" were not tolerated, and with a shout of "Drop it," they were made to desist. But with all the goodwill in the world it was impossible to protect a child in the midst of such a crowd. I was quite a quarter of an hour before I could get through Temple Bar, and in front of me was a woman and her baby. I did my best to protect her by pushing with my back against the crush, and I even induced others to follow my example. But after a while the crowd was too many for us, and we were swept along. The woman and her little one disappeared in the enormous gathering, and I do not know what became of them. I can only hope that a merciful Providence watched over them. But for years afterwards the piteous appeal of the poor mother rang in my ears, "Oh, do save the poor child!" and as I write the scene returns to me. The thousands of lights, the illuminated Prince of Wales's feathers that had taken the place of the gas lamps, the surging, laughing crowd, the gaunt old gateway with its recollections of traitors' heads and suggestions of the Bridge of Sighs, and the one poor woman battling for the life of her pale-faced, frightened little one! It

is not a pleasant memory, and I repeat the warning of "Dagonet," "leave the baby at home."

"MR. PUNCH" ON ROYAL MARRIAGES.

To turn to a pleasanter subject. Those who are old enough to remember the marriage of the Prince of Wales, and walked like Dr. Johnson (but rather more expeditiously than he did) down Fleet Street, will recollect that "No. 85" was filled with a company of fair ladies and clever men surrounding a quaint statuette of "*Mr. Punch.*" Those who can boast with the enthusiasm and happiness of youth that it was "before their time" will find a sketch of the group in the volume of the *London Charivari* of the period. If my memory does not play me false the drawing was from the pencil of the late George Du Maurier, then the society sketcher of *Punch par excellence.* As the Jester of Fleet Street is a great protector of tradition the same statuette (once again wearing a wedding favour) put in an appearance at the wedding of the Duke and Duchess of York, once again to be surrounded by some of the same familiar faces. One of those faces was that of the great artist in black and white who, a few years ago, received well-deserved honour at the hands of his sovereign. As Sir John Tenniel has been the cartoonist of *Punch* since 1851, it has been his duty to celebrate in the

pages of the world-famed journal with which his name is inseparably connected the various marriages of the members of the Royal Family. The earliest of them all was the union of the Princess Royal with Prince William of Prussia—a union that has given to United Germany her present Emperor. *Mr. Punch* was drinking the health of the happy pair, and ready to throw after them the satin slipper of good luck. Then came the glorious cartoon of the marriage of the Prince and Princess of Wales, when the sponsors of the Royal couple were Britannia and the Sea King of Denmark, and the surrounding throng for the first time suggested the peoples of the Empire—Australians, Indians, Canadians, and the conquerors of Southern Africa. These two drawings were followed by others showing sweet Princess Alice marrying the man of her choice, the Sailor Prince gathering to himself the Rose of the North, and the Soldier Duke bringing home his bride. And not the least popular amongst them was that design which told the world how the Highland laddie had assisted the Stuart lassie "to jump over the ring fence," to the intense disgust of a not too well favoured German band. But, whatever the subject, the motive was the same—the picture showed the genuine joy that the nation felt in the promise of domestic happiness that each new union shadowed forth. It was the delight of the nation more than a century ago that the

King was a born Englishman. It is pleasing to think that at the latest Royal wedding it could be said that a born English Prince has married a born English Princess. The Duke and the Duchess can stay in Britain until the end of the chapter and never find themselves away from home. Such a reflection is not without its value at the end of the century, when the nation regards not entirely with approbation the continual encroachment of foreign competition.

NUPTIAL PRESENTS.

But to return to the subject of the keeping of a wedding holiday. The customary expressions of satisfaction on such occasions take the form of presents and illuminations. The list of the offerings to the Duke and Duchess of York was instructive. Some of them were of great intrinsic value, and others of a less costly character. Lord Salisbury gave the Duke and Duchess a complete set of his literary works, and I think another offering consisted of a few bundles of firewood. No doubt the will was taken for the deed in every case, and the cost was absolutely outside the region of consideration. Then there were any number of loyal addresses breathing a spirit of hearty goodwill, and bearing the signatures of many worthy and well-meaning individuals. I am glad to think that these messages of peace were presented in person by

their authors, but were bound together in a handsome volume to be read hereafter. We have the authority of *The Times* (confirmed by Mr. Henry Arthur Jones) that "Cabinet Ministers are human—very human," and no doubt Royal Princes and Royal Princesses are equally human. Accepting this theory, a betrothed couple on the eve of their wedding had something better to do than to listen to the pleasing platitudes of the representatives of public bodies. Of course, there were those who looked upon the presents as superfluous, but presumably they were either sour old bachelors or hypocrites. When young Brown leads to the altar the lovely Miss Smith, a "friend of the family" must be particularly ungenial and possibly stingy who objects to sending a small *cadeau* for the good of the coming house. Many of us could say that most of the charming *objets de virtu* that adorn our reception rooms would never have found their way to their existing position had it not been for the kind attention of our wedding guests. Who would buy the clocks and the knick-knacks that are really so delightful in the *salon* and the *salle à manger* in cold blood? John Leech years ago showed us the two wedding gifts of a happy husband. On the first anniversary of his marriage paterfamilias gave his wife a bouquet and a bracelet, but a decade later the same gentleman (now more a paterfamilias than ever) returned home with a double perambulator and a large bundle of

asparagus. So it seems ungracious to grudge all the charming presents that the nation collectively and individually present to the bride and bridegroom when there is a wedding in the Royal Family. I have noticed that on these auspicious occasions a few fussy philanthropists invariably suggest the benefaction of some deserving institution as an appropriate method of helping the young couple to commence housekeeping. This seems to me to be rather a roundabout way of honouring the bride and bridegroom, and appears to deserve the title of "charity away from home." Wedding presents, as a rule, are more numerous than select, and happy are the newly-married who do not find themselves possessors of dozens of silver card-cases and grosses of carriage-clocks. But in the instance of a Royal wedding, when everybody tells everybody else what they are going to send, a greater choice of objects becomes possible.

WEDDING DECORATIONS.

A glance at the streets on the occasion of a Royal wedding shows that stars and capital letters in gas-pipe are in high favour with those who wish to illuminate. More elaborate designs in crystal are also received with approbation. The old "Vauxhall oil lamps" of our forefathers seem to have lost their popularity, although in the shape of "fairy lights"

they appear as the survival of the fittest. Nowadays, at times of general rejoicing, there seems to be a general desire for a house-to-house illumination. Perhaps I may be permitted to suggest what I believe to be rather a novel form of decoration. I tried the system with some success during the Jubilee, and provoked a feeling of envy amongst my neighbours. The plan has only one slight drawback—if you are not careful you may burn your house down, and possibly then find that the illumination is not "covered" by your policy of insurance. However, given scrupulous attention to details and decent good luck, and you should avoid all danger and expense and create quite a sensation.

My idea is this. Convert your mansion into a reproduction of those miniature chalk cathedrals that look so well when their windows are "cut out" and filled in with coloured glass and the whole lighted up with a candle. All you have to do is to get a large quantity of tissue paper. Say you select pink and blue. Having procured your materials, fill up the portico with strips of the paper, and cover over every pane of glass with the same semi-opaque medium. Then put candles in profusion behind the paper, and the thing is done. In special celebration of Her Majesty's Jubilee I tried a transparency, but I cannot conscientiously declare that it was wholly a success. I got a very large box and covered it over with thick

brown paper. Then I "let in" the words "Long Live the Queen." I put a moderator lamp behind the covering. For five minutes it was absolutely charming. But with the sixth minute the thing burst into flames, and for some moments it was a question whether or no we should invoke the assistance of the Fire Brigade of the L.C.C. Fortunately, the conflagration "burned itself out" without doing any serious damage, and as everybody was looking at the illuminations, we escaped a visit of the gentlemen in occupation of the salvage vans. This was distinctly a score, as "salvage" is always an expensive matter.

CONCLUSION.

In conclusion, the way to keep a wedding holiday happily is to avoid dangerous crushes, oil lamps, and boy assistants. If you want to be quite safe—if the illumination is general—you can stay at home. You may, under these circumstances, spend a cheerful evening in admiring your own device and sneering at the devices of your neighbours. But, above all, and before all—whatever your rank in life may be—if you go abroad amongst the admiring million, be sure "to leave the baby." On occasions, when London is out in its millions, there is emphatically (for infants) no place like home.

CHAPTER IX.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CLUB.

OF course, everyone can give a history of the club movement. It is common knowledge that the magnificent palaces in Piccadilly and Pall Mall, St. James's Street and Covent Garden, grew out of the coffee houses kept by such men as White, Brookes and Boodles. These respected individuals (who appeared and disappeared in the last century) knew literally "how to labour and how to wait." I suppose the latest survival of what may be termed "the club coffee-house" was Evans's in Covent Garden—a hostelrie that long since has ceased being a name, and is (alas!) rapidly fading as a memory. "Paddy" Green has gone, and before he retired, with his kind wishes for everyone's fireside and his snuff-box, the collection of theatrical pictures in "the café part" had been scattered far and wide by a sale by auction. The *Punch* table, and the *Fun* table, and

the corner haunted by Lord Henry Lennox, Serjeant Ballantyne, and Mr. Lionel Lawson have vanished into air, and the glees and suppers and "calculating waiter" are visions of the past. It is true that a *cercle* with a Bar-sounding title that was started some years ago in the neighbourhood of the Temple was of nearly as informal a character as Evans's, but in other respects the resemblance between the two establishments was not particularly remarkable. All sorts of stories are told about this club. One friend was treating another to numbers of whiskies-and-sodas. "I really cannot allow you to pay for another," said the guest. "Then pay for it yourself," suggested the host. "But I am not a member," urged the guest. "No more am I!" was the prompt rejoinder. Then there were legends of the pockets of the waiters being deprived of their contents while they (the servants) were handing round coffee; and the marker complained that a member had walked off with half-a-dozen billiard balls while a star was being marked at pool. It was said that the committee refused to take any notice of the first offence because the property of the waiters did not belong to the club; but they put up a notice calling upon "the gentleman who had taken by mistake" the ivory to return it to the house steward. I need scarcely say that many of these amusing stories formed a part of that magnificent collection of "chestnuts" in the

possession of that most "amusing rattle," Mr. Ben Trovato. And another of these anecdotes possibly tells the tale of a gentleman who preferred to belong to "the five-shillings list of members" instead of paying the full five guineas demanded from his companions as the regulation annual subscription.

"How do you manage it?" asked a friend. "Is it arranged with the secretary?"

"Oh no," was the reply. "I give the hall-porter a couple of half-crowns on Boxing Day, and he passes one in for the rest of the season!"

But of course such a state of things nowadays at the end of the century is utterly impossible. I suppose I must be writing of a time when the "admission gratis" coffee house was maturing into the proprietary club, with its safeguards of committee, candidates' book, ballot box, entrance fees, and first year's donation payable in advance.

POLITICAL CLUBS AND THEIR "JUNIORS."

A few lines about political clubs. Of course, the Carlton, Conservative, and Reform, to say nothing of White's and Brooks's, are right enough. And to the list may be added I suppose "the Juniors," although some people say that it takes a good twenty years to weed a newly-started party circle. I have so many friends in the Junior Carlton that I would

not wish to say a word condemnatory of the past of that most comfortable institution, still, a glance at the Candidates' Book of 1899, in Pall Mall, would no doubt reveal names and professions very different from the names and professions that used to appear in earlier volumes. The Junior Carlton of Pall Mall is a vast improvement on the Junior Carlton that occupied the premises of the Old Parthenon on the Regent Street side of Waterloo Place. In days to come the same no doubt will be said of other political Juniors. Like good wine, they will improve as years roll on. Rome was not built in a day, and the prestige of a club cannot be obtained with the same celerity as marble, morocco, Turkey carpets, and the electric light. And here I may suggest that the young man from the country should be a little careful of joining clubs that advertise and circularise for members. Dover Street and Albemarle Street are famous for these mushroom societies. When I was a boy I was induced to belong to a club called by a Service title. I fancy we started in Dover Street. Soon we (I mean the owner) prospered, and took a house in Pall Mall. It was a beautiful house, divided from the Guards by the premises of the London Joint Stock Bank (in those days partly used for a boarding house), and the principal entrance was garnished with medallions of Nelson and Wellington. We did not get on, however, very well in our new

diggings, and one day someone called us unkindly the "Junior Criterion," upon which we collapsed. I need scarcely say that I had left the club long before the final disaster.

A COUPLE OF CELEBRATED REVIVALS.

Leaving mushroom clubs, I turn my attention to the Bohemian communities with which I fancy the Eccentrics would be proud to claim kinsmanship. I hope I am divulging no confidences when I hint that the Eccentrics themselves, although scarcely ten years old, can look back to a history which commenced with the initial year of the nineteenth century. In 1800 there was an Eccentric Club, which flourished until 1846. All sorts of great people belonged to it —judges, peers, and wits. I fancy (and now I speak under correction) that Lord Denman was a member. I am under the impression that not only Sheridan but Sheridan Knowles were on the list. By the way the latter "turned serious," and scorned the plays he had written with as much contempt as their modern audiences. And the fact that the Eccentric is a revival reminds me that there was another Beef Steak before the establishment of that charming institution which once had its quarters over "the front of the house" at Toole's Theatre in King William Street. My friend, Sir Henry Irving, has, I fancy, the original

silver grill of the ancient society, and before now I have sat in the club-room on the prompt side of the Lyceum Theatre wherein the wits of the eighteenth century used to congregate for the consumption of port and the discussion of the affairs of the nation, both over and under the table. The revived Steak was originated in the rooms of the late R. Corney Grain. These chambers were in Pall Mall Place, and were situated over a suite of palatial apartments belonging to one of the finest journalists, novelists, dramatists, and essayists of modern times. For the moment I forget his name, but, during the Commune, he was called in Paris (where his writings were as well known as in town), no doubt on account of his defence of all that was hateful to the Communist cause, "le Monstre." He was a fine fellow, this great journalist, and was an original member of that Steak when his friend (the late R. Corney Grain) called the society into revived existence. Among other works of great importance, he was the author of "Green-room Recollections."

THE SAVAGE AND THE ARUNDEL.

Then there was the Savage, and a little later the Arundel. I have belonged to both and can testify to the delightful hours spent in the neighbourhood of Covent Garden and Salisbury Street, Strand. The

history of the Savage is given in the preface of the first volume of the Savage Club Papers. I was looking at the volume only the other day, and admiring the frontispiece. It contained any number of portraits. The Savages were grouped round the offspring of their brains. In the centre was that magnificent figure of an old Bohemian, Dr. Strauss. Round about him were crowded Halliday, Jeff Prowse, J. C. Brough, H. J. Byron, George Rose, Harry Leigh, Artemus Ward, Planché, Tom Robertson, Clement Scott, John Holingshead, George Cruikshank, and Tegetmeier. Quite in the background were two writers who have since come well to the front. It was natural enough to see them side by side, for their fathers (both eminent men of letters) had been the staunchest of staunch friends. The first of these workers in the background was Mr. W. S. Gilbert, and the other (to give him his French title) was "Monsieur Chose." I had the honour of contributing almost my first story to the Savage Club Papers. It was simply beautiful. It contained a duel, a murder, an abduction, and all sorts of horrible incidents, and had the cheerful title of "Found Drowned."

"Is it to be illustrated?" I eagerly asked the editor.

"Yes, my dear fellow," replied Andrew Halliday. "I forget what the cut was about, but I know it fits

in excellently. I am sure you will be charmed when you see it. Of course it was not drawn for the story, but it is most appropriate. Look out for a pleasant surprise."

I did; and on the publication of the Papers discovered that "Found Drowned" had been illustrated with a sketch of an idiotic stork standing on one leg in a puddle in front of a feeble waterfall! When I complained to Andrew Halliday afterwards he said, in a sorrowful tone, "So like you young authors, you are never satisfied! And I so considerate, too! If I had given it to you to be written up to it would have completely spoilt your story! You, with your duels and murders and the rest of it, didn't want a stork on one leg. Not you! The story was better without it!"

I did not reply, but my heart (in its own fashion) consented. Thinking the matter over now, I am convinced that Andrew Halliday was a model editor. His motto seemed to be "acts, and then (if necessary) apologies."

The Arundel was also a delightful gathering of lawyers, wits, and actors. However, it lacked the entertainments of the Savage, and never rushed into amateur theatricals. The gentlemen with the fierce titles and kindly hearts once appeared before the Queen and the late Prince Consort in a piece written by themselves and played by their own company.

A RECIPE FOR CLUB-MAKING.

To justify the title of this chapter, I jot down the *modus operandi* of starting a social club. Get a small committee (say a dozen) of really popular men. Get each of the committee to secure twenty really popular candidates. Elect them, and they, with their proposers and seconders, will form the list of original members. Make your annual subscription as small as you can. Take rooms well within the resources of the club, and furnish plainly and comfortably. Get a good paid secretary (honorary work is never quite satisfactory), and let him labour his hardest. Pill a few doubtful candidates, inclusive (if possible) of a questionable peer. And when you have got to this stage you will find that the club is self-supporting.

CHAPTER X.

IN "RATHER MIXED" CLUBLAND.

IT must not be supposed for a moment that when I head this chapter with its chosen title, that I propose to treat of second-rate clubs or *cercles* of questionable respectability. I wish only to deal with that sort of "clubland" that is to be found in London, from the end of August until the close of September. At that time town is supposed to be empty, and consequently all members are imagined to be on the Continent, or away shooting, or at the seaside. As a matter of fact, a very large number of Londoners are tied by the leg to their customary habitation, and it is those unfortunate people who feel the inconvenience of being guests against their will, or hosts contrary to their inclination. Without being grossly selfish, I think a man may claim to take his leisure at his inn, which is old style for enjoying himself at his club. That he can do that in a temporary home is question-

able. Away from his favourite haunts, and finding familiar faces lost in a crowd of strangers, he feels like the lady who mislaid the lost chord—"weary and ill at ease." There is no luncheon table sacred to a select set, and even there is a difficulty in finding a "chatable corner" in the smoking room. So, until his own club emerges from a condition of closure for "alterations and repairs," he refrains from visiting Pall Mall, Piccadilly, or St. James's Street; or makes up his mind to go abroad. When "the Senior" absorbs the Bishops', and "the Junior" migrates to St. James's Square, matters become rather mixed in clubland.

"CLOSED FOR ALTERATIONS AND REPAIRS."

I suppose there are no worthier set of men than club secretaries, and yet it is said that many of the West-end *cercles* would remain open all the year round were it not that the "honorary members" wanted a little shooting in August and September. I think the suggestion scarcely fair. On most House Committees there is a committee-man who would willingly undertake to act as *locum tenens* for "the adjutant of the club." Colonel Chose or "good old Gooseberry" are always available. Both know the average cost of the servants' board (after taking into consideration the "leavings" of the coffee-room), and

both are ready to deal with "backed bills" and the other grievances incidental to *cercle* humanity. Chose for many years was president of his regimental mess, and "good old Gooseberry," before he became "Resident" to His Highness of Chutneypore, was an A.D.C. to the Governor-General, so they are equally qualified to perform the responsible duties incidental to the proud position of secretary to the Parthenon. Still, *closure* "for alterations and repairs" saves a world of trouble, and Colonel Pillington, under those conditions, finds it unnecessary to ask a favour of anyone. By Colonel Pillington I mean the average club secretary. He gets from £300 to £600 a year, and has been selected from about a thousand candidates. Many years ago, as a member of the committee of a well-known West-end club, I had to assist in the selection and election of a secretary. We had any number of applicants for the post—generals, colonels, barristers, and a couple of baronets. Strange to say, no sailor applied, and retired members of the Civil Service were also conspicuous by their absence. The selection of six "possibles" was entrusted to a sub-committee, who duly reported to the main body. The half-dozen containing the secretary-elect were duly summoned to meet their electors face to face. Our chairman put several test questions, one of which was "Whom do you consider the most important personage in the club?" Five answered "The chairman of

the committee"; the last "The cook." We elected the gentleman whose appreciation of the "chef" showed that he fully understood club requirements.

THE CLUB THAT IS ALWAYS OPEN.

There is one club in London that has the reputation of never closing its doors from one year's end to the end of another. I refer to the Garrick. But I am afraid that the reputation is not entirely merited, because a few years ago the "pleasantest *cercle* in town" did shut up for a few weeks to carry out some structural alterations indispensable to the comfort of its members. But even then the Garrick proudly refused to ask for shelter elsewhere. The famed *coterie* of Covent Garden does not exchange hospitalities with kindred institutions for an excellent reason. If you accept favours you must confer them. No doubt the Athenæum would be glad to shelter the Garrick, but it is just possible that the sacred smoking-room, with its Clarkson Stansfield over the mantelpiece and its John Gilbert between the windows, is full enough at all events to do without an invasion of scientists and ecclesiastics. Be this as it may, the Garrick neither grants nor seeks hospitality. With the solitary exception to which I have referred, it has been continuously open for something like half a century. May its shadow never grow less. That shadow was

wont to fall in King Street, but nowadays it darkens the pavement of a *rue* christened in the club's honour.

EVANS'S THE EXCELLENT SUBSTITUTE.

And when I write of the Garrick I am naturally reminded of that excellent substitute for a *cercle*—unconventional and yet select—that used to flourish within a stone's throw of its handsome and massive portals. I refer once more to Evans's in the days of "Paddy" Green—when Lionel Lawson and Henry Lennox, Ballantyne and "Ponny" Mayhew used to congregate near the fireplace in the *café*. There never was a better club-house—without entrance fee and without subscription—than "the Supper Rooms." Go when you would you found "every-one in town." There was only one rival meeting-place, and that was the long smoking room of the Raleigh, when that *coterie* of warriors and ex-warriors used to "keep" under the old Gallery of Illustration in Regent Street. But the company of the club was limited, and the *habitués* of the Supper Rooms numberless. "Paddy" Green had been an old actor. He had played the Charlie in the theatrical adaptation of "Tom and Jerry" when the piece was produced at the Old Adelphi. He was consequently full of anecdotes of Yates, Keeley, and Power. Hanging to the walls of the

café part of the building were any number of theatrical portraits. Some of them were of considerable merit, others sad daubs. I wonder what became of them. They were sold by auction when Evans's lost its licence. Who were the purchasers? I fancy that my accomplished friend, Sir Henry Irving, got some of them, but of this I am not sure. But with or without pictures, Evans's was a pleasant and interesting place, and never so popular as when regular clubland was disorganised by "alterations and repairs."

THE WORK OF THE HALL-PORTER.

When the *cercles* are exchanging courtesies the value of the hall-porter is fully felt. This useful official is expected to know every member by sight, and to be particularly on the alert when his gentlemen are guests. At one time I belonged to some thirteen clubs—in the days of the long ago when the latch key was more in requisition than at present—and some of those I visited not more than once or twice a year. And yet I was always known. Since then gigantic *cercles* have sprung up, with three times as many members as the normal total of a large West-end club of the first class, and yet the subscription payers are recognised and passed. It may be taken that two thousand is the outside total of a recognised "co-operative palace." At two large places, one in

Piccadilly and the other on the Thames Embankment, I believe the number is doubled if not trebled. Fancy a hall-porter being expected to know and recognise as belonging to members of his club six thousand faces! And yet I believe this is not only a possibility but an actuality. There is only one story on record of a non-member gaining admission to a club and using it as his own. The enterprising individual, however, on attempting to change a bogus cheque, was discovered and promptly arrested. The club in which he was run to earth was, of all places in the world, the Guards—the smallest and most select spot in all clubland!

THE EXCHANGE OF CLUB COURTESIES.

The exchange of courtesies is the natural outcome of kindred tastes and political opinions. The Carlton absorbs its junior, and the Guards accepts hospitality from and gives it to its *vis-à-vis* the Marlborough. The Oxford and Cambridge is on visiting terms with the Old University, and the Union and the Travellers are frequently friendly. Of late years the Service clubs have been slightly at loggerheads. The Rag, once great "pals" with the Junior, has arranged with the Naval and Military, a *cercle* that for about a couple of years had a habitation without a name within the hospitable walls of the J.U.S.C. Nowa-

days those who live in Cambridge House have no room for their hosts, and act accordingly. For all that the Junior is happy in joining hands with the East India, the spot sacred to the most excellent of curries. Brooks's, White's, Boodle's, Arthur's, and the other "social" clubs select partners without difficulty. After all, the closure only lasts a month or six weeks, when every member, according to the strict rule of the game, should be out of town.

And when the period is over the return to the renovated club-houses is pleasant indeed; for that return means familiar haunts to *habitués*, and to all the rest the meeting of old friends and the absence of strangers.

CHAPTER XI.

IN AUXILIARY CLUBLAND.

EVERYONE of any status in Town (especially if he has remained a bachelor until years of discretion) has a "second club." And that he has what may be termed "an alternative *cercle*," proves the customary proprietary right in a first or principal co-operative palace. As a matter of course, a youngster, when he leaves school or the university, is put up by his father or some near relative for some appropriate survival of the old coffee houses of the Georges. If the boy is destined for the Church his name naturally appears on the books of the Oxford and Cambridge, or the "Old University" in Suffolk Street. If he is to belong to either of the Services, he chooses the Junior United Service, the Naval and Military, or the Rag. If he is simply to remain a country gentleman, then the doors of White's, or Brooks's, or Boodle's are open to him. Of course, if he is to be

a fervent politician he must choose the Carlton or the Reform, the Conservative, the Constitutional, the National Liberal, or (perhaps) the Devonshire. And having got himself elected to any one of the establishments to which I have referred, he is in a position to look about him for a "second club."

"FIRSTS" AND "SECONDS."

In these days of rapid growths, I am not quite sure that such old-fashioned institutions as the Union, the Windham, and the Raleigh, would care to be called "second clubs," and yet thirty years ago they certainly had no claim to be put on a par with the Carlton. But in the long ago of the sixties a man would call his second club "a pot house." He did not mean to degrade his junior *cercle* to the level of a tavern, but merely to imply that he had been elected to something better. Nowadays he would perhaps hesitate about the description as the old-fashioned "seconds" are sometimes so much worthier than the new-fangled "firsts."

"CLUBS FOLLOW THE FLAG."

It may be accepted, I think, that Englishmen are naturally "clubable." Some little while since I was looking through a small book which purported to give all the clubs in the world. It really contained a

vast amount of information, but the sum total of the news was this—that Englishmen had their clubs all the world over. It seems the right thing to do. Say that Brown, Jones, and Robinson visit a hitherto undiscovered island. After taking possession of it in the name of the Sovereign they begin to develop it. The operation entails the presence of Smith, Snooks, Jones, and McTab. There come hundreds more, and after their arrival, thousands. Churches and chapels spring up side by side with shops and factories. Villas begin to appear on the outskirts of what was once a desert, but is now a rising town. Then the following conversation is held.

"I say, Jones," says Brown, "were you a member of the Garrick?"

"No, I managed through being put down by my godfather to get into the Athenæum!"

"And, Mr. Robinson, what club had the advantage of your name as that of a member living abroad?"

"I? Oh, I joined the St. James's because my people thought I might go in for diplomacy. But then, of course, I became a member of the Conservative."

"I say, oughtn't we to have a club?" continues Brown, putting a second question. And then the first *cercle* in Undiscoverdia is founded. Brown (of the Garrick), Jones (of the Athenæum), and Robinson (of the Conservative and the St. James's) are the

first committeemen. Candidates rush in. Some are pilled, and the pilling creates a sensation. In a year or two the club becomes a most flourishing institution. It has a fine house, a good cellar, an imposing hall-porter. In fact, it is a colonial version of "home, sweet home."

But what does the Frenchman, if he finds himself away from civilisation—that is to say, out of reach of Paris? He meets his equals at the *café*. He plays dominoes with much skill, and sips absinthe.

"I belonged to the Pommes de Terre," says Jules.

There is a pause. Alphonse is not particularly interested, and Gustave yawns.

"It was an amusing *cercle*," continues Jules. "I wonder if we could have one here. We might get the papers and the table d'hôte and distractions. It seems to be a happy thought. What do you say?"

"That I prefer the *café*," replies Alphonse.

"That I want another game of dominoes," returns Gustave.

And so the matter is allowed to drop.

It is said that "Trade follows the flag." I think we might add as a rider that "clubland keeps step with the Union Jack."

"LAMBS" AND "LAMBKINS."

About thirty years ago (when we were all more or less children) dining clubs were in great favour.

These were scarcely "seconds" or "pot houses"; they were only *coteries.* The Lambs were renowned for their pleasant dinners, and soon had "a junior" in the shape of "The Lambkins." Certain "reverend seigneurs" who now object (out of season) to listen to the chimes at midnight, belonged to these festive gatherings. In the sixties there was a song which was often heard at Evans's on a boat-race night, sung by amateurs, with the title, "Come and be a Rollicking Ram." The Lambs and the Lambkins were both more or less "rollicking." Then there was the Wig Wam (not for a moment to be confounded with the Savage), wherein certain mysterious rites were performed before a candidate could be admitted to membership. The dinners of those clubs were eaten in the near neighbourhood of the Haymarket Theatre. They have vanished, and have left, I think, but few successors. At the end of the century we have the Kinsmen, the New Vagabonds, and the Argonauts. But perhaps the most popular of the newer generations of *coteries* were respectively known as the "Two Pins" and the "Charivari."

THE TWO PINS.

A few seasons ago the Two Pins Club was so frequently referred to in the columns of "London Day by Day," in *The Daily Telegraph,* that its

existence no longer remained a mere myth but appeared as an established fact. As I cannot claim to be a member myself, I betray no confidences when I reveal what I have heard about it. I fancy it consisted of about fourteen members—all of them good fellows, and many of them distinguished men. I believe it was necessary to ride and possess a horse. It was against the rule to follow the hunt for lunch on a bicycle or even a four wheeler.

"But why the Two Pins?" I asked, in the days of my ignorance.

"From the surnames of a couple of British horsemen representing respectability and daring—the final syllables of Gil-*pin* and Tur-*pin*. See?"

I did "see," and greatly appreciated the cleverness. I believe the title was chosen by the life and soul of the Club—a gentleman who has long figured as a humorist of the first water.

"And what is the object of the Two Pins Club?" I asked.

"A good ride before luncheon," was the answer; "the gallant horsemen prefer *menus* to foxes, and *chasse cafés* to hares. And as they are all good fellows, laughter attends upon appetite."

THE CHARIVARI CLUB.

But perhaps one of the most promising of the auxiliaries of London clubland is a rather mysterious

circle known as "The Charivari." It certainly has a President and a Vice-President, and I have seen mentioned (in the columns of the Press) a "foreign section." From the sources of information open to the public I have learned that the members of the Charivari are great people for lunching. About a year ago the Charivaris met at Calais and broke their fast at the *buffet*. From what I am told I believe the club to be unique. The other day I interviewed a very prominent member.

"Who are eligible for election?" I asked, with a fine scorn for Lindley Murray.

"Only good fellows; but we do not consider nationality. Still, if a Chinaman were to put up, he might perhaps find that the line was drawn at a resident of Yokohama."

"Are ladies admitted?"

"Only as visitors, and then they must be cousins, sisters, or aunts, added, of course, to daughters and wives."

"Have the ladies any privileges?"

"Only of being entertained. But it is an unwritten law that their titular lords and masters may do what they please. They may light up without permission, and order another bottle without reproach."

"And will the Charivari live and prosper?"

Then came the sharp and decisive answer, "It *has* lived and *does* prosper."

TEST BY CLUB.

I have not touched upon the Zodiac, with its company of "Brother Signs," or "the A B C," wherein every member represents a letter of the alphabet, or the "Olde Set of Odde Volumes," renowned for its good fare both mental and culinary, or the Casuals, where talk is in greater favour than food. Enough to say that "one and all" are very pleasant. If a man belongs to any of them he may be taken as "not a bad fellow" without further investigation. A Londoner can always be summed up by his clubs, and "seconds" spot him quite as readily as "firsts."

CHAPTER XII.

A PANTOMIME AT DRURY LANE.

BOXING Day at the end of the century is still associated with Christmas boxes. As a rule, those boxes are rather a tax upon those whose duty (a duty, however, sometimes combined with a pleasure) it is to supply them. But there is to everyone, whether it be the host who has purchased it or the guest who has accepted the host's valued hospitality. I need scarcely add after these observations that I refer to a box at the Drury Lane pantomime. Every year the annual has become more difficult to compose, for the simple reason that its originator has made it a point to beat his own record. Year after year, from 1879 to 1893, the late lessee of the National Theatre determined to make his present pantomime better than the one of the year past, and by universal consent accomplished the seemingly impossible feat. And since the death of

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Sir Augustus his successor has satisfactorily attempted the task of his predecessor. I had the privilege of witnessing the preparation for what is now known as Harris's last pantomime. As a spectacle it was the ultimate word of the century.

PANTOMIMES OF THE PAST.

I must frankly confess I had no knowledge of how many things had to be done to produce a pantomime until I had made the inspection to which I have just referred. I rather pride myself upon an intimate acquaintance with things theatrical, and from a very early age have been accustomed to visit that place of disillusions, "the land behind the scenes." In years gone by I have been present "on the other side of the footlights" when *Jack the Giant Killer* was being performed at the Princess's Theatre. The father of Sir Augustus Harris was the lessee of the theatre, and M. Zola might point to the fact in support of his theory of heredity. *Jack the Giant Killer* was one of the most successful of pantomimes ever produced outside the walls of Drury Lane, but it was not to be compared with the modern annual. As the ironclad of the present is to the wooden three-decker of the past, so is the Panto of to-day to the Panto of five-and-twenty years ago. Everything nowadays is on an infinitely grander scale. Where

there was but one ballet scene, there are now three or four; where there was a solitary procession, there are now half-a-dozen; where there was a company of fifty or sixty, there is now an army numbering the greater part of a thousand. Those who were sufficiently fortunate to be present in Drury Lane during the run of the pantomime watched the evolutions of no less than seven hundred persons. Fancy, seven hundred persons dressed and drilled and taught to dance and sing to amuse the children! That those children are of all ages is true enough, for grandfather and grandson are equally delighted. It is a sign of the times that nowadays no one thinks of apologising for visiting the pantomime. In the pretty-long-ago "we went to please the little ones;" now we go to please ourselves. It may be justly said that no Christmas holidays are complete without a visit to the pantomime. And I write "the pantomime" advisedly. In the case of Yule-Tide entertainments there has been a distinct survival of the fittest.

"JACK THE GIANT KILLER," AT THE PRINCESS'S.

I have mentioned *Jack the Giant Killer*, at the Princess's, and it may be interesting to old playgoers to jot down a few particulars. Miss Louise Keeley, daughter of Mrs. Keeley, and wife of Montagu

Williams, was "the principal boy." Saker, Widdicomb, J. G. Shore, and Espinosa were also in the cast. The giant was the finest then on record. He could open and close his eyes, walk, talk, sing, and dance. Poor Henry Byron was the author, and I remember one line that Mr. J. G. Shore (who was as good in pantomime as in romantic drama) used to give with much unction and infinite effect:—

"I go to Bath! With rage my hair doth *Bristol*."

That was a pun of the period! I am afraid it would scarcely be favourably criticised by the exponents of the "new humour." Espinosa was a graceful dancer, who subsequently made his mark as Friday in the pantomime of *Robinson Crusoe*. Another feature of *Jack the Giant Killer* was "the Rifle Dance." The volunteers were just coming to the front, and this was the first time that drill was suggested in the steps of the *coryphées*.

A VISIT TO THE PROPERTY ROOM.

And now, having talked quite long enough about the past, I turn to a time of far more immediate moment, the last of Harris's pantomimes. I was permitted to wander about Drury Lane at my own sweet will, and follow the bent of my fancy. I shall never

forget the scene. The theatre was turned into a very hive of industry. Business is invariably very brisk in the front of the house, but just before the production of the pantomime the work of behind the scenes finds its way into the auditorium. Work was going on everywhere. The very passages were filled with busy assistants in the pantomime production. Here was a chorus practising a glee, there a part of a ballet practising a new step under the direction of my excellent friend Mr. D'Auban, and yonder a number of seamstresses hard at work putting the finishing touches to some costumes. I made for the property room. I ascended a number of stairs, and found myself near the sky. All the work was done. The hundreds and thousands of "properties" required for the pantomime were completed, and all that had to be done was to take them to the stage and have them in readiness for those who had to use them. There were plaster moulds weighing hundred-weights, in which had been cast the enormous oyster shells that were to figure in some of the fairy scenes. There were all sorts and conditions of—well, everything. Fairies' wings for the transformation scene; animated gunpowder barrels for Guido's plot; heads of savages for Crusoe's Island. If I were to attempt an inventory, I would have to fill hundreds of pages of this volume.

IN THE PAINTING ROOM.

I passed through a door, and then found myself in the old painting room—there is another that has been recently constructed. We were close upon Boxing Night, so the distempering of the acres of canvas had been nearly completed. The "talented assistants," as they used to be called in the old play-bills, were, however, hard at work putting finishing touches to a wonderful cloth representing London in the time of the Georges.

"Very busy, sir?" I asked one of these clever young gentlemen.

"Very, indeed, sir," was the reply; "but we are all right. Sir Augustus never leaves anything to chance. There is nothing behindhand with him. We are generally prepared to produce a day or two before our time, and that is the reason that (barring accidents) there is never a hitch on a first night."

I passed a "Merry Christmas" to my friend the "talented assistant," and we separated.

PREPARATIONS FOR THE BALLETS.

And now as I came down the stairs that led to the stage, I had an opportunity of learning some of the reasons that probably were the cause of the mana-

ger's great popularity. I peeped into one of the dressing rooms now tenanted only by fine clothes waiting to be worn at the dress rehearsal. These neat apartments were a vast improvement upon the rooms of the past—order, cleanliness and comfort ruled supreme. And wherever I went I found the same consideration on the part of "the direction" for the happiness of "the company." It is not unnatural, consequently, that everyone should be satisfied—County Council, Renters, and last, but not least, the great British Public. And now I found myself among the dresses. Scores of seamstresses were at work completing the costumes to be worn in the great procession, giving the "History of England in twenty minutes." The display reminded me of Planché's admirable work on things sartorial. Here were the dresses of some half-a-dozen centuries, correct to the minutest details. Besides these elaborate adornments there were the most exquisite fancies for a couple of the most elaborate ballets, to say nothing of the "outer man" equipment for a company numbering the greater part of a thousand individuals! I was reminded of the interior of the cave of Ali Baba, wherein the rather-too-free-traders housed their merchandise. One room was crammed full of the most expensive silks, satins, and brocades, worth many guineas a yard. They were there because they had been bought on the chance of

"their coming in useful some day." And as a matter of fact that "some day" invariably arrived. Sir Augustus seemed to know intuitively the things that would be wanted, and purchased them when and where they could be got.

"You are very busy?" I suggested to a bright-looking lady, who had kindly accompanied me at the request of her superior officer, the queen of the department. "You seem to have a number at work?"

"You have not seen them all," was the reply. "Every room is full, and you will find dressmakers cutting, contriving, and sewing in the auditorium. You will find them in the passages, behind the circles, and in every room that is not required for rehearsal. But our work is nearly at an end—at least for the pantomime. But when it is over we shall begin upon something else."

And I saw that my kind and courteous informant was quite right. The passages and rooms had been invaded. During December every inch of the National Theatre, both before and behind the foot-lights has to be devoted exclusively to the needs of the pantomime.

"And the ballets will be fine?" I asked.

"About the finest we have ever done," was the answer. "The dances of the fishes under the sea will be the talk of London. The hues are so delicate,

the designs so clever. I have never seen anything to touch it."

And again repeating my Yule-Tide greeting (which made me feel in my fur-lined coat rather like a premature Father Christmas), I walked into the saloon. In one corner were a number of ladies trying over a chorus; in another my friend Mr. D'Auban (to whom I shall ever be grateful for putting into action the quaint old tunes I discovered in the British Museum proper to the time of the "Maske of Flowers") was giving a lesson to a lady who was to dance a *pas de deux*. I greeted my talented friend with great cordiality, and found that, like everyone else, he had been hard at work. Only that morning he had devised a dance appropriate—of all things in the world!—to animated newspapers! He had just seen the dresses of his ballet of seventy ladies, and was satisfied, too, that the combinations of colours would be perfect.

"I have it all in my mind," said Mr. D'Auban; "and I expect to see a marvellous effect."

And, having once more qualified for Santa Claus, I took myself to the stage. Here, again, hard work ruled supreme.

READY TO BEGIN.

I have seen a large number of stage managers at one time and another. I have been present at a re-

hearsal of which Charles Kean has taken the direction, another which has been commanded by Mr. Fechter, a third "bossed" by Mr. Sothern, a fourth by Mr. F. C. Burnand, a fifth by Mrs. Kendal, a sixth by Miss Mary Anderson, a seventh by Mr. Coe, and an eighth by Sir Henry Irving; but I can honestly declare that the late Sir Augustus Harris, in my humble opinion, was, as a stage manager, better than them all. He not only knew what he wanted done, but knew how to do it. Moreover, he had the power of making others see his points, and causing them to adopt them. He could show at a moment's notice "how everything should be done." If put to it he could give examples of all the passions from amiability to an expression of the bitterest revenge. And all his *employés* knew this, and consequently believed in him implicitly. The late lessee of Drury Lane would have made an excellent general. Of that I am sure. I have seen him play the part of "Commander-in-Chief" as it had never been played before. And he had, in the person of Mr. Arthur P. Collins, an excellent "Chief of the Stage Staff," who, on the death of his friend, worthily replaced him in the supreme control.

CHAPTER XIII.

LONDON EXHIBITIONS.

A FEW years ago, amidst much rejoicing, the Imperial Institute was opened to the public. There seemed to be some doubt about its exact object, and perhaps it is not quite right to call it a common (or garden) exhibition. That there was a magnificent inaugural ceremony is patent to everyone who read the descriptions in the daily papers. A vast number of seats were occupied by Fellows of the Imperial Institute, and I fancy that the qualifications for Fellowship were what may be termed elastic. Still it must be remembered that the Institute is not confined to India, Canada, and the Colonies, but extends to Great Britain. "It seems to be the nearest approach to Federation at which we have arrived at present, and H.R.H. the Prince of Wales (to whom the idea, I believe, with justice is credited) is to be congratulated upon having obtained the first move

towards what we all desire and all hope some day to possess. If the Institute proves to be the foundation-stone of a noble edifice that will become the admiration of the world, it will be far more valuable than all the exhibitions the world has ever seen. There is no reason why this should not occur. Forty years ago who would have thought of such an institution? The late Prince Consort imagined a congress of nations in South Kensington, and it has been left to his eldest son to originate a scheme on the same site that is calculated to bind together all the subjects of the Queen, be they at home or living 'beyond the seas.' Such an idea is full of the most glorious possibilities. May they be realised." So I wrote when the Institute was inaugurated, but recent events have proved that my view of the future, to say the least, was rose coloured. For all that, the Imperial Institute assisted to create that cordial feeling of good fellowship that we find in existence between the Colonies and the Mother Country at the end of the century.

STRAY THOUGHTS ABOUT THE GREAT ORIGINAL.

I have rather an indistinct recollection of the first Exhibition. It was opened when I was a very small boy indeed, and I am under the impression that my father (who was favoured with an invitation to be present, and whose season ticket I still possess) was

called upon to appear in Court dress. In those distant days the levée costume consisted of a snuff-coloured coat (with steel buttons, ruffles, and arrangement for a bag wig), an elaborately embroidered white satin waistcoat, white satin breeches and stockings, old-fashioned shoes, and steel-hilted sword, with pendant chain and a cocked hat. Nowadays, a man, if he cannot boast a uniform as a Cabinet (or other) Minister, soldier, sailor, militiaman, yeoman, or volunteer, wears a neat arrangement in black velvet—a distinct improvement upon the old costume. I rather think there was a miniature frigate on the Serpentine, from which was fired a royal salute. And I recollect, as Colonel Sibthorp strongly opposed the erection of the building on the ground in the Park immediately opposite Knightsbridge Barracks on the score that it would injure the trees, the Palace of Crystal was raised to a height sufficiently lofty to include within its walls a cluster of growing oaks. The architect was Mr. (afterwards Sir) Joseph Paxton, the chief of the garden staff of the late Duke of Devonshire. No doubt the coming knight took his idea of the conservatory-like aspect of his design from the glass at Chatsworth. Sir Joseph was a great friend of Mark Lemon, the first editor of the *London Charivari*, and was, I think, the only "outsider" who was ever entertained at that weekly banquet of wit and other excellent things, the *Punch* dinner. Then I remember that the streets in

the neighbourhood of the World's Show (which was to secure peace for ever, and, as a matter of fact, served as an overture to those stirring military dramas the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny) were impassable. I recollect my mother giving a cabman half-a-crown to drive her from one side of the Knightsbridge Road to the other, which was at the rate of about a penny a foot. Then I call to mind a Chinese junk which came up the Thames, and was ultimately exhibited at a show called the Chinese Exhibition. I am under the impression that the captain of this junk was treated with great honour, and given a place amongst the Ambassadors at the opening ceremony. And I fancy that amongst the exhibits from some outlandish country was a hideous idol. The Government of this outlandish country, upon receiving an official invitation to send specimens of the produce of the land, despatched all they had—a pair of native slippers and their god.

FROM KNIGHTSBRIDGE TO SYDENHAM.

All the world knows that, after a struggle to retain the Crystal Palace of 1851 on the site it originally occupied, the structure was removed to Sydenham and set up afresh. If my memory does not play me false, the smaller transept at Upper Norwood is the "old original" that used to face the barracks at Hyde

Park. Amongst other exhibits at Sydenham removed from Hyde Park were two fountains, one of glass and the other showing figures representing the four quarters of the earth. And was not the Wurtemberg collection also at Knightsbridge, and "the screen of kings and queens?" And of all the exhibitions that have been held during the past half-century the dear old Crystal Palace as it now exists has been the best. We are so accustomed to its glories that we forget their value. Think of the various courts, the Alhambra, the villa from Pompeii, the Egyptian and the Greek. When fire destroyed one of the transepts, the two huge figures of Memnon were lost in the flames. They were never replaced, possibly because the public takes more interest nowadays in variety entertainments than in archæological research. Still, the Crystal Palace continues to flourish as the home of the best music, the purest literature, and the brightest art. *Floreat!*

THE EXPOSITION OF 1862 AND AFTER.

The second International Exhibition was held in 1862—nearly forty years ago. It was designed by an amiable officer of the Royal Engineers, and both of its domes still exist at the Alexandra Palace on Muswell Hill. It was not nearly as successful as its predecessor, and when it closed there was a general

understanding that it would not be repeated. On the shutters being put up there was a vigorous effort made to secure the building for the nation. But sensible people objected "that it really was quite too ugly," and the objection was sustained. On its site stands the Natural History Museum, which as a structure is certainly a great improvement on the original building. Before it was pulled down the hall of the Exhibition of 1862 was used for the holding of a grand fancy bazaar in aid of the Home for Incurables. The Prince and Princess of Wales were present, and two of the features were fitted-up theatres. At the first of these —Richardson's Show—was played a piece called *The Siege of Seringapatam*, by F. C. Burnand, in which the author took a prominent part. He was supported by Oliffe (son of Sir Joseph, the founder of Trouville and medical adviser to Napoleon III.), Charles Hall (now Recorder of London), Matt Morgan (the artist), and many others. The rival theatre was under the management of Lady Anne Sherson (a relative of the Duke of Fife), and there was played therein a burlesque drama called *The Port Admiral*, written by Mr. Thomas Gibson Bowles, M.P. The author again played in his own piece, and was supported by the late Frank Marshall and myself. During the "intervals" the rival companies used to march round the building in the hope of attracting audiences. Mr. Burnand appeared as a sort of com-

promise between a field-marshal and a postilion, Mr. Bowles as a British tar, Mr. Matt Morgan as a Spanish bullfighter, and Mr. (now Sir) Charles Hall as an acrobat. Those (there were two of them) were pleasant days indeed, and the Home for Incurables greatly benefited by our charitable labours.

THE BAZAARS OF THE EARLY SEVENTIES.

And now, leaving out of consideration the series of home exhibitions that began with the Fisheries and ended with the Colonies, or the Militaries and Navalries of a few years since, I come to the consideration of a now half-forgotten specimen of the international sort that flourished early in the seventies. It was held in the galleries belonging to the Horticultural Society, and the gardens of that useful, but not (then) very prosperous institution were thrown in. The notion was to encourage foreigners to bring their goods duty free to England, and then, when they had got them here, to actually sell them at a great reduction. This transaction was very popular with the British public, but it was not regarded with so much favour by the British trader. The unfortunate proprietor of premises, say in Regent Street or Piccadilly, could not behold with unmixed satisfaction a foreigner underselling him in what was really a gigantic bazaar. The foreigner could offer a French clock for twenty shil-

lings—some 30 per cent. cheaper than the article as displayed in the London shops. The British trader had to pay for carriage, duty, house rent, and the rest of it. The foreign "exhibitor" got his carriage paid and his rent for nothing, so could afford to be liberal. But his liberality was rather too much for the British retailer. A most useful body called the National Chamber of Trade took the matter up, called an indignation meeting at Willis's Rooms, and the International Exhibitions on the bazaar principle disappeared for ever—or nearly ever.

CHAPTER XIV.

COACHING THE UNIVERSITY CREW.

I FANCY it is the fashion nowadays to suggest that popular enthusiasm is on the wane about things athletic. Some "hundreds of thousands less than the average" go every year to see the Derby, and a million or thereabouts annually steer clear of the towing path, when, according to the placards on the Underground Railway (as the Metropolitan and District used to be called until recently), "the crews are on the river." For all that and all that, during the last weeks of Lent all England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, to say nothing of India, Canada, and the Colonies, are talking about "the boat race." Everyone (more or less) has something to say about the powerful, steady stroke of Oxford, and the quicker, more catchy, less effective pull of the Cantabs. I remember some years ago feeling prouder than I have ever felt in my life when at the close of the

great race my friend the coach of the Oxford eight singled me out for recognition and greeting as he led his charges back in triumph to their quarters in the Lyric Club at Barnes. But that moment is replaced. I have beaten its record. It now ranks in my memory as the second proudest moment of my life. It is entirely effaced by the hour and a half's delight I experienced only two or three seasons since, when I had the honour of accompanying Mr. R. C. Lehmann on board the *Swan*, and watching the practice of the Oxford crew. There was another man on board, an old Oxford Blue, who took the time. I was the solitary passenger. Three all told—besides the crew. It was a unique experience, and in spite of the pelting rain I had the most delightful time imaginable. When it was over I came to the conclusion that after all the editor of "Men and Women of the Day" had shown his wisdom in adding my otherwise insignificant name to the list of his biographies in his useful and interesting volume. I felt, when drenched and dripping I returned to the Leander dressing-room, that I had at length established my right to be considered a celebrity. I had actually seen the Oxford crew at close quarters—had followed the boat neck and neck from Putney to Barnes and back again! Since that time I have become more than usually unsupportable to my friends. When any of them say anything about the

boat race (and they talk more or less of nothing else during Lent) I invariably contradict them.

"Yes, yes," I murmur, "it is all very well. But take my word for it that I am right—and I ought to know, for a few seasons since I was on board the *Swan* and saw the crews at practice."

Then there is a silence. There is no answer. What reply *can* be made to a man who has seen practice from the deck of the coach's launch? My friends have given the question up. So have I. So must everyone.

COACHING A CREW À LA BOUCICAULT.

Until the occasion to which I refer I must confess that I had very vague notions about the training of a crew. I think if I had analysed, so to speak, my memory I should have found in the residuum a recollection of *Formosa* at Drury Lane. To my lasting regret I did not see the revival of Boucicault's play a year or two ago at the National Theatre. My friends and colleagues, the dramatic critics of "the new school," told me at the time that it was old-fashioned, out of date, and the rest of it. My friends and colleagues are rather fond of that sort of sweeping denunciation. It does not mean much. It merely suggests that if they had to write such a play nowadays they would write it very differently.

And no doubt they would. And the admission is not calculated to lessen the reverence felt for the memory of Dion *quâ* dramatist. But I saw *Formosa* when it was produced, and distinctly recollect an ex-prize-fighter getting the Oxford crew to sit upon chairs in a line and "go through the movement" of rowing. Then the ex-prize-fighter (who was the coach) sang the crew a song, and the nine (for the cox took part in the delightful recreation) joined in the chorus. The daughter of the ex-prize-fighter (if my memory does not play me false) exercised a baleful influence over the stroke of the Dark Blues, and that eminent athlete would have gone completely to the bad had he not been pulled up at the last moment by his "guide, philosopher, and friend," the Oxford steerer.

"Jack," said the Dark Blue coxswain, "you must be true to your 'Varsity. The public have put their money on the Oxonians, and we must not betray them! Your *alma mater* expects you to do your duty!"

Thus spoke the steerer, or words to the same effect. Jack (I think the stroke was called Jack) became a changed man from that moment. He gave up balls down the river, was rescued by his colleagues from a sponging house, and won the race shoulders square and a straight back in a common paddle!

Such was my preconceived notion of training an

eight. After my real experience I can confidentially say, "it is not a bit like it."

FROM PUTNEY TO HAMMERSMITH.

I never remember a "wetter day" than the occasion of my outing. It pelted at Putney, and even the *habitués* of the towing-path sought shelter under the sheds of the boathouses. The dogs did not seem to mind the downpour; they walked about as usual. One of them (he was chained up) treacherously repaid the kindly pat of my friend the coach by biting the hand that caressed him. It was a wicked thing to do, and I believe that canine public opinion accepted the theory that the deceitful dog had been carried away by his feelings, or, rather, his betting-book. Those who know Dog Latin say that the biter had a "bit on Cambridge," and had, consequently, reasons "of his own" for attempting to incapacitate the coach of the Darker Blues. But the dog was out in his calculations. My friend the coach, in spite of his accident and the frightful weather, was as fit as a fiddle.

I first entered the London Boating Club (where the Oxonians put up), and had a glance at the photographs of boating men past and present; strolled through the apartments devoted to "changing," weighing, and rubbing down, and got aboard the

Swan. My companions had waterproofs; I wore a fur-lined coat.

"You should have scaled before embarking," said the Old Blue. "You will find that coat will put on an extra stone of water before we get home."

The Old Blue was right. But there was no time for chaff. The crew had carried their ship from the boathouse to the river and were afloat. They took off their wraps and were ready to start. A few directions and off we went, the *Swan* keeping just in rear of the Oxford rudder. From that moment there was a silence broken only by the voice of the coach as he called out to this man and to that to correct some fault. When he was not giving a particular direction he repeated a general instruction. I was reminded of Wellington Barracks and the sergeant-major in charge of the newly-joined subs. My friend Mr. Lehmann was intently on the alert, and so was the Old Blue, and so was I.

As we passed along we had the banks of the river to ourselves—not a soul to be seen anywhere. But civilisation came within measurable distance as we neared Hammersmith Bridge. There were a couple of omnibuses and a cab crossing. As we approached they pulled up sharp, and heads appeared in all directions. It was against human nature to proceed while the Oxford eight were in view. My friend Mr. Lehmann shouted out a few directions,

and we shot the bridge in splendid style. Then he called to the man in charge of the engine, "Once," and there was a solitary whistle. Then, "Twice," and we had two whistles. The crew slowed at the first signal and stopped at the second.

"Put on your wrap, Seven," shouted Mr. Lehmann, as he noticed that one of his charges (a freshman in his first term) had forgotten to take the necessary precautions to keep off chills. Then there was time for a few minutes' chat and recreation.

INCIDENTS OF A TRAINING.

"Don't laugh at my ignorance," said I, "but how do they train? When do they begin it?"

"On Ash Wednesday," returned Mr. Lehmann. "Up at seven in the morning, a spin before breakfast. Then tea and toast and a chop. Practice. Lunch at 1.30, beef or mutton, watercress or salad. Practice. Dinner at seven. Fish, a fowl *entrée*, beef or mutton. Two glasses of ale at luncheon, same at dinner. One glass of port at end of the latter. Bed at ten o'clock."

"And do you train with them?" I asked.

"Certainly. I accompany them in their morning spin. I am responsible for their being fit. If I see anything amiss in any of my charges I march him off to the doctor. However, they are all wonderfully

well, and we haven't had to call in medical assistance so far."

"Except in your own case," I said, pointing to the bandaged hand peeping out of a sling.

"Oh, that's nothing," he cried. "Now then, back to work."

We were off again. The coaching went on as before. Stroke and Bow lead the boat between them, the earnest little coxswain (covered up in shining waterproof) occasionally giving the time. As we neared Barnes Bridge we saw a luggage train hasten up and stop in the centre of the structure. The engine driver, stoker, and guards had a good look at us. As we passed Thornycroft's the same thing happened. Work was suspended that we might be carefully inspected. Officials and mechanics formed together in groups to join in a common criticism. It was a link binding all Englishmen together—the love of sport, of pluck, of a good fight honourably fought.

THE MORAL OF THE BOAT RACE.

We had been to the "Ship" at Mortlake, and were returning to Putney with the tide. Just after leaving the Barnes Bridge our crew were called upon to give up "paddling" to have a row. Then they "let her have it." It was a splendid eight minutes. My

friend, Mr. Lehmann, shouted out all sorts of cries of encouragement. Now and again I heard the yells of the hunting-field finding a place amongst the echoes of the towing-path. It was a beautiful sight; one never to be forgotten. The boat sprang at almost every stroke. The blades of the oars worked like clockwork. The crew strove with the earnestness of Englishmen.

And as I watched them I could not help feeling that in the youngsters before me were the true germs of the British race. They were all good in the schools, but it was something more that shone in the bright good-looking faces of the heroes of the river. I recognised in the men before me the stock from which come the "V.C.'s" and the "D.S.O.'s." There was not a man amongst them, from the sturdy little steerer up to gigantic No. 5, who would not have held his own at Glencoe or shown Tommy Atkins the way into the Redan at Sebastopol. Here before me were the descendants of the men who had fought at Agincourt, Crecy, and Waterloo. And here were they exhibiting the same fine old British pluck that had carried their ancestors triumphantly through the treacheries of the Peninsula and the cruel mismanagement of the Crimea. Oh, it was a grand sight! The sort of sight that makes one's eyes glisten and one's heart beat a little faster at the thought that the blood coursing through one's

veins was British born, and belonged exclusively to the children of Britannia.

"What rot!" will say any of the crew or their successors, who reads the above language, quoting the immoral criticism of Lord Arthur Pomeroy.

"Quite so, my good young friend," I reply in advance. "Certainly 'what rot!' but the idea is sound enough."

And so it was. While our lads can row and live up to rowing we need not fear for the Union Jack. It will keep floating all the world over.

ENGLAND AND FRANCE.

We returned in triumph. We passed the Cambridge crew shortly after Hammersmith. They glanced at us critically as we left them. And here I may note that the best feeling of *camaraderie* exists between the rival Blues—it extends to the coaches and all concerned. As a proof of this, take the case of Mr. Lehmann. He is a Trinity Cambridge man; was in reserve for the eight when up at Cambridge; and yet he has been the Oxford coach. "Our friends the enemy" are as popular as "our friends the friends." Before taking my leave, after the most delightful of morning's recreations, I asked Mr. Lehmann if the French were really beginning to take up rowing seriously.

"Certainly," he replied. "And if they extend the movement, you take my word for it, it will change the characteristics of the nation. They will prove to be like Englishmen."

And I believe they will. Well, if they do, and invade us, we will tolerate them. A man who is worthy to rank with an Old Blue is worthy of anything and anybody.

And when I say this I do not fear contradiction from the globe in general, and from the banks of the Thames between Putney and Mortlake in particular.

CHAPTER XV.

THE SEQUEL TO THE DERBY.

A LONDONER usually pays a visit to Paris to see the Grand Prix. Not every Londoner, of course, but very many who live within sound of the bells of Cockayne. Of late matters sporting have improved amongst "our lively neighbours" (who, by the way, what with their Anarchists, Communists, Anti-Semites, and the like, are very frequently "our sad neighbours"), but in spite of this improvement there ever will be many strange turns-out. For instance, although many Frenchmen are now capable of handling the ribbons and tooling a coach, yet the typical Jules prefers, as a general rule, to have his driving done for him. He likes to have a number of friends, male and female, on his "veritable dragge," and then desires his coachman to mount. The hired jehu appears in the costume of the Postillon de Longjumeau and everyone (inclusive of the typical

Jules) is satisfied. Arrived on the course, "a veritable lunch, five o'clock," is discussed. The typical Jules and his friends, male and female, imitate the "gentlemans and ladies sportismans" across the Channel as well as they can, and are perfectly satisfied to get back to Paris safely. The typical Jules is merry, but the survival of the Postillon de Longjumeau is as sober as a judge. But whatever be the method of the typical Jules, the fact remains that Paris—yes, all Paris—is agog with excitement on the occasion of the Grand Prix, and can think of nothing but racing.

RACING UNDER THE EMPIRE.

I suppose that, although the Duc d'Aumale was always fond of horse training, the great revival of French sport became an accomplished fact under the patronage of Napoleon III. The Emperor had a great love for "the noblest friend of man," and did his level best to bring Epsom to Longchamps. During his long sojourn in England—when he was occupying that now-betableted house in King Street, St. James's—the coming ruler of France was continually at the more frequented of the meetings. If he never took part in an actual race himself he at least entered in the lists of Eglinton Castle when the glories of Ashby-de-la-Zouch were revived, and some think

surpassed. The Emperor Louis Napoleon was the first to render the June meeting at Longchamps thoroughly popular. That popularity has now lasted for something more than forty years. It has survived the dark days of the Siege and the Commune, and promises to be one of the features of the coming twentieth century. The Grand Prix of the Republic is not so very unlike the Grand Prix of the fifties and the sixties. The State tribune is filled by the President, his wife, and the more illustrious of their guests, and the classes and the masses are there—the first in their hundreds and the last in their thousands. The only absentee of to-day is the flower-girl of the Jockey Club. "Isabelle," some quarter of a century ago, was an institution. It was her duty to appear in the colours of the favourite, and to supply the swells of the Jockey Club with button-holes. I believe during the rest of the year she was the presiding genius of a newspaper kiosk on the Boulevards opposite the Grand Hotel. But during the Sunday devoted to the Grand Prix she was the heroine of Longchamps. Poor Napoleon III.! The last time I saw him was lying in state at Chislehurst. As I write, his pale, calm face comes back to me, his iron-grey moustache and "imperial," his scanty locks, his apparently well-formed cranium. Only the other day I saw a cast of his head taken by an eminent surgeon immediately after death. The cast showed

a fine forehead, but my friend the eminent surgeon suggested that, taken as a whole, the head was a poor one. "It was the head of a dreamer," said my friend. "It belonged to a man infirm of purpose and weak to a degree." Well, Napoleon has long since passed away, and so have "Isabelle," Cora Pearl, and Schneider, and the other glories of the Empire.

THE TURF IN THE FRENCH THEATRES.

The mention of that most clever and *piquante* of singer-actresses, Mdme. Hortense Schneider, reminds me that the great French public have never cared for the racing drama. Only a year or so ago a Drury Lane drama dealing with the Grand National was transplanted to Paris, and although staged to perfection under the direction of the late Sir Augustus Harris, failed to prove very attractive. I have been told by the author of the piece that the manager of the theatre insisted upon the introduction into this play of "real modern life" of a *ballet* of clowns! And quite recently there was a French "mimodrame" produced at the Princess's, in which a "bookmaker" (presumably a "bookee") was a very prominent character. The "bookmaker" wore a long light coat, a pair of field-glasses and a straw hat. He was pressing in his attentions upon the unprotected but virtuous heroine, to that lady's in-

dignation. However, upon the noble-minded maiden stamping her foot and in dumb show "bidding him begone," the "bookmaker" politely lifted his straw hat and made himself scarce. Beyond this I do not think that there has been any very modern French drama treating of the turf. Some years since I remember seeing a play in Paris (I fancy it must have been at the Ambigu) in which there was a scene laid on a racecourse. I have rather an indistinct recollection of what it was all about, but I remember that the course was kept by mounted British soldiers (presumably Life Guards), and there was only one policeman—and he an avowedly comic character. A horse was brought across the stage, and received with cheers and laughter. The play ended by the hero, who was also a sailor, receiving a free pardon (for something he had been accused of doing but had not done), and the vote of the House of Commons. This was accorded him by a General, who was called in the bills "Vellington," and I supposed must have been intended for the Victor of Waterloo. I knew that it was a very wonderful performance altogether, but fancy that the least effective part of the piece was that which dealt with the racing.

A RACE MEETING IN BRITTANY.

Of course the meetings at Paris and other large towns are not unlike our own sporting fixtures. But

when one travels further afield there is a marked difference between racing at home and abroad. Frenchmen choose the hottest months of the summer for steeplechasing, and their example is followed by the Germans. Not very long ago I was visiting a town in Brittany where races had been organised. The month was August, and the sport, of course, steeplechasing. There were a number of wretched screws entered for every race, and it was absolutely a miracle how some of them surmounted the various "obstacles" that barred the way to the winning-post. There was a restive horse in one of the contests, and this animal bolted. Immediately a mounted gendarme started in pursuit, caught the creature up, and brought it back in triumph! Fancy such an affair occurring at Epsom! Fancy a mounted policeman pursuing Flying Fox and bringing him back! However, the spectators in Brittany only laughed and cheered. The incident, although not very novel, was evidently amusing.

FOLLOWING THE LEAD OF THE FIFTH LANCERS.

But, in spite of the "sports" of the Empire and the intelligent support of a new school of French athletes, I do not think that racing will be popular with our neighbours for a long time to come. If you speak to a foreigner nowadays you will find that he

has lost some of his respect for the Lord Mayor, has less regard for Leicester Square, and five times out of six has heard of the Derby. However, the love of horses is steadily gaining ground. Possibly taking the idea from our Fifth Lancers and other cavalry regiments, the Parisians have started an amateur *cirque.* It is quite the mode, and excessively *chic.* There is not only excellent horsemanship, but now and again fairly amusing fooling. So far the Paris *cirque* is unique, but as the French officers are the chief performers it is not unlikely to prove the parent of many similar institutions.

FROM PARIS TO ISLINGTON.

But, if the Parisians have got as far as following the Fifth Lancers, they have yet to learn the benefits of the Military Tournament at the Agricultural Hall. And yet, strange to say, although there is nothing like our Assault-at-Arms to be seen in Paris, one of the features at Islington has evidently been suggested by a well-known item in the old-time programme at the Hippodrome. In the days of the Crimean War the entertainment invariably concluded with a military sketch. The "Siege of Silistria" was extremely popular in the fifties, and this "spectacle" (which I witnessed as a very small boy) was brought back to my mind at the end of the century, as I

watched the incidents of the Display of Combined Arms. In the Paris Hippodrome there was a sort of plot; at Islington there is nothing of the kind. The "Siege of Silistria," I remember, used to conclude with the entrance of the British Army (about twenty all told), containing detachments of "veritable Lif Gars" and "veritable iglanders," the whole under the command of "le Prince Albert." The "Lif Gars" wore a miscellaneous lot of assorted helmets, and the "iglanders" appeared in baggy fleshings. However, the British army was received with effusion, which grew in volume as "God Save the Queen" was played by the orchestra, and culminated in the wildest enthusiasm when the tune changed to "Partant pour la Syrie."

And now, like the horses at the end of a race, I must pull up. However, before quitting the subject of this chapter, I cannot help recording the opinion of a noted English athlete, who, speaking of the love of sport in France, said to me the other day, "It is steadily making progress, and gradually changing the national characteristics. When the French love sport as much as we do they will understand us better, and the Channel will become nothing more serious than a geographical expression."

"Yes," I replied, "except to those who have to cross it on a rough day."

CHAPTER XVI.

THE LONDON GONDOLA.

DURING the "silly season" (and even later) the condition of our cabs is discussed in the columns of the London Press. From this I take it that interest in road-travelling is reviving—the more especially as every now and again there is an "indignation meeting" of cabmen to protest against something or other—and consequently a few hints as to how it is done at the end of the century may be acceptable. But before I proceed to its consideration I may permit myself to refer to Paris to act as a "city of comparison."

PARIS VOITURES AND LONDON CABS.

The French *coupé* is smarter than the London four-wheeler; but I am not sure that the Victoria is preferable to the hansom. The Parisian jehus seem to be suffering under a chronic grievance. They never

smile and seldom speak. When they have a fare their chief object in life seems to be to commit manslaughter by driving over some absent-minded pedestrian. Thanks to the asphalte, it is not difficult to kill a foot passenger. All you have to do is to make for him, and, if he does not clear out of the way, go over him. The omnibus drivers are more merciful, and of the two would rather save a pedestrian than kill him. Indeed, I have seen a driver of a tramcar absolutely pull up rather than run down a lady and a family of four! But it is only fair to add that the driver was regarded as "eccentric" by his *confrères*. It may be as well to know what to do in the case of coming across a too-insolent cabdriver. The last time I was in Paris I hailed a Victoria and told the coachman that I wished to take him by the hour. He protested loudly, but submitted. I was accompanied by my better seven-eighths, and soon discovering that the amiable lady was a trifle nervous, the indignant jehu drove into everything. We charged omnibuses, collided with tramcars, and attempted to cross over vans. At my urgent entreaties my better seven-eighths preserved her *sang froid*. Finding that the Dick-Turpin's-ride-to-York kind of progress did not trouble us, the coachman adopted other tactics. He made his horse walk at the pace of a weary steed at a congested State funeral. We took fully a quarter of an

hour to get across the Place de la Concorde, and ten minutes to pass the Hotel Meurice in the Rue de Rivoli. Then, finding we still were patient, he stopped his horse altogether before the Louvre and put on the nosebag. It was then I protested.

The man treated my complaint with contempt. While we were in altercation a "guardian of the peace" passed. I appealed to the law as represented in his person. In a moment the "guardian of the peace" was mounted on our box, and we were driving at a smart pace to the nearest cabstand. The *sergent* descended, and introduced me to another policeman. A book was produced from a kiosk, and I was requested to insert a narrative of my wrongs. It was then that I regretted that apathy shown about the acquisition of the French language, which, alas! is a characteristic at our public schools. But my better seven-eighths came to my rescue, helped me with my irregular verbs, and generally superintended my grammar. The story was told in French of varying quality.

"And now, monsieur," said the commissaire, "as we have your name and address, you will be warned when your evidence is required at the trial. You will please be in the way, and give the porter at your hotel particulars of your movements."

I was horrified! What had I done? During the rest of my two days in Paris I was in terror lest I

should be called. Fortunately the machinery of the law was slow, and I made my escape.

FROM THE CAB TO THE POLICE COURT.

But to return to London. People have grown so accustomed to the rules and regulations anent cabs that they have forgotten them. This seems rather like an Irishism, but it is substantially correct. I have not looked into the Act or the bye-law keeping the Cockney jehu in order for a very long while, but I fancy that every cabman should, upon the application of his hirer, produce a list of his fares and also supply a ticket. As the latter custom has entirely ceased it may have been abandoned. However, it is worth noting that when there is a dispute about a fare the hirer can request the coachman to drive him to the nearest police-station, where the matter can be arranged. As a rule the jehu prefers to grumble and depart. If he is not too abusive this is as it should be.

I must confess I cannot recommend summoning a cabman. I know, of course, that everyone owes it to society to take steps to protect his fellow-man, and particularly his (if I may use the expression) fellow-lady from the danger of insult and over-charge. But for all that I prefer to leave a police-court severely alone. And for this entirely selfish reason. Many years ago a cabman was so indignant at receiving

about a shilling more than his proper charge that before driving away he struck at me with his whip. I was a lad in those days in my teens, and remember the exact date. It was on the first night of Fechter as "Hamlet" at the Princess's. Well, I determined to summon the man (fortunately, or unfortunately, I had secured his number), and I carried out my vengeful intention. The result was that I had to hang about the court until the time arrived for the hearing. When it did arrive, the man never appeared, and in his stead came a miserable-looking wife and two small children. The husband and father was ill. The magistrate, at my earnest request, granted a remand. I felt deeply touched—I was very young in those days. When the case was again called—a week later—the man appeared, pale and careworn, and explained that his wife and children were laid up. He was most miserable, and asked for mercy. I seconded his efforts to the best of my ability, giving my evidence reluctantly and as a hostile witness to myself. By the aid of these tactics he and I managed to get the defendant off with the infliction of a small fine. Personally, I was delighted the fine was a small one, as ultimately I paid it myself. However, I was rewarded for my trouble by the penitent cabman thanking me with tears in his eyes, and courteously intimating that he saw no reason why I should not call myself a gentleman. Previously his

language had suggested that, whatever I might think myself, he had serious doubts as to the validity of my claims to rank with the lowest order of chivalry.

A GRAIN OR TWO OF CHAFF.

And when I hint that harshness is sometimes the necessary medicine for rudeness, I would add that kindness is, when possible, the better remedy. As a body of men cabmen are an excellent set of fellows. Considering that they have to be out in all weathers and at all times, they really are wonderfully good-tempered. That they are past-masters of chaff is universally allowed. The other day a friend of mine took a cab a journey which extended to within some three hundred yards of two miles. He gave the driver a shilling. "Beg your pardon," said the man, "but do you mind my driving you to next door? *I want to complete the full distance!*" On another occasion a middle-aged man, after emerging from Lock's in a brand new *chapeau*, gave eighteenpence to a coachman who had carried him from St. James's Street to Sloane Square.

"Quite right, sir, I have no doubt," said cabby; "and if sixpence *should* be due to me, oblige me by keeping it towards getting a genteeler 'at!"

The man had his joke, but not his "extra tanner."

Since the establishment of shelters I have noticed

a marked improvement in the sobriety of our jehus. Even intoxication, however, on occasions has its advantages—a sentiment which, no doubt, would meet with the stern reprobation of Sir Wilfrid Lawson. In advance of this contention, perhaps, I may instance what occurred on a recent occasion. There was a hurricane in London. It was simply terrible. I was coming home from a newspaper office, and could not see a cab anywhere. At length, about half a mile from Fleet Street, I stumbled upon a four-wheeler. The driver was cheerful and quite tipsy. He made not the slightest difficulty to driving me some three or four miles in a westerly direction. I do not believe that he would have objected to attempting to get to Aldershot, Margate, or, if it comes to that, India, China, or Japan. We were a little tardy in starting, as my coachman thought it necessary to tell me a long anecdote about nothing in particular through the window. Then a policeman interfered, and ordered him to "drive on." The cabman was exceedingly polite to the constable, and off we went. At first we took the pavement a little too much, but later on proceeded excellently well, Jehu leaving matters in the hands, or rather legs, of the horse. I am glad to say our well-trained steed was evidently a teetotaler. After some short cuts that I fancy must have been favourites with the worthy brute (I refer to the quadruped), we reached our destination. I paid the cabman his fare,

and remarked that "it *was* a storm!" "What storm?" asked the man indistinctly and smilingly. He had evidently not noticed the inclemency of the weather.

"Are you sure you will get home all right?" I repeated two or three times.

"'Corse!" returned Jehu at last with dignified amiability. "Sammy knows 'way better than I do!"

And then Sammy starting off, I saw no more of either of them.

CABS FOR BETTER OR WORSE.

Taken all round, our cabs and our cabmen are not unsatisfactory. The men are cheerier than a number of their foreign contemporaries. They are, as a rule, civil and obliging; as for the cabs, in spite of the complaints about the hansoms, there are no better vehicles for the public in the world. The "London gondola" is exactly suited to Londoners. Victorias, well enough in the summer, would be impossible in the winter. As to the "growler," several specimens of this type of conveyance are far from bad. There are worse four-wheeled conveyances on the Continent than in London. But it is only right to add, "not many." However, we might go farther and fare worse, and with this rather half-hearted benediction I reserve further remarks about cabs and cabmen for my next chapter.

CHAPTER XVII.

LONDON ON STRIKE.

DURING the last few years the public have had a practical experience of the inconvenience attendant upon a body of working men "going on strike." As a rule Londoners do not come face to face with artisans who have abandoned toil. Generally they read of a cessation of labour in the daily papers, and discover the result of the cause in the increased charges for coal, gas, and other necessaries. However, not long since, the Cockney mind was concerned by the vagaries of cabby. The streets were deserted by hansoms, and even the four-wheeler was difficult to find. In spite of this, none of the body politic were much the worse. Sufficient for the day were the growlers thereof, and no one was at a loss to secure (when really necessary) that particular kind of conveyance which years ago used to be known as a "patent safety." So the nuisance of the suspension of operations caused a minimum of inconvenience.

BOUCICAULT AND "THE LONG STRIKE."

Strikes are more or less a modern invention. In the days of yore, when workmen were dissatisfied they resorted to violence, instead of depending upon "masterly inactivity." Ages ago machinery used to be the foe, and the most popular mode of meeting the enemy was to utterly demolish the offending apparatus. Things are changed since then, although even now the tradition lingers upon the stages of theatres devoted to melodrama. And here, as I have mentioned things histrionic, I may refer to *The Long Strike*, which was produced at the Lyceum by the late Mr. Dion Boucicault some while after the success of *The Colleen Bawn*. No doubt Mrs. Dion Boucicault (who was in the cast) will remember it. There was one scene in it which was immensely effective, but which would have been more effective still had the telephone been then invented. I have the vaguest recollection of the play's plot, but I call to mind that it was necessary for some one or other to be stopped from sailing from Liverpool. I fancy the some one or other was a missing witness required to save the hero's life or the heroine's reputation. The scene was a telegraph office. Enter the friend of the hero or heroine (as the case may have been), who asks the telegraph clerk if he can be put into

communication with the operator at the other end. There is some delay, as the operator has to be found —he was on the point of leaving the office for the night. But soon he is at his post. Then comes the great effect. "Has the *Star of the North* (or whatever the ship was called) started?" "Yes." "Is So-and-so on board?" "Yes." "Can he be brought back?" "Only by signal." "Signal for him, then." "We have." "Does the ship see the signal?" "Yes; and So-and-so is coming back." This was the climax, and on a grateful cry of "Saved, saved!" the curtain fell amidst thunders of applause. Had Boucicault had the assistance of the telephone in those days how much "sharper" would the dialogue have been. There was an air of unreality in the working of the needles, but with a telephone it would have been perfect. I wonder what has become of *The Long Strike.* Is it ever played now-a-days? As Mr. Tree says in *The Red Lamp,* "I wonder." And here I may recount a little anecdote that is interesting, when we remember that Mrs. Boucicault is still amongst us. I was editor of *The Glowworm* in those days, and I called upon Dion Boucicault at the Lyceum, and saw him in his dressing-room. I was arranging for a *feuilleton,* and thought he might write "us" a story. He suggested novelizing *The Flying Scud,* and novelized it was with the collaboration of the late Mr. Clarke, author

of "Charlie Thornhill." I was standing behind a screen, when, unsuspicious of my presence, Mrs. Boucicault entered and said she wanted to intercede for one of the company who had been fined (Dion was a strict disciplinarian) for some breach of the rules. I shall never forget the sweet kindness of Mrs. Boucicault's pleading accents. Possibly with a wish to terminate the interview as quickly as possible the husband yielded, and Mrs. Boucicault departed, overjoyed at the success that had attended her mission. When she had left the room I emerged from my accidental ambush, and continued the negotiation about *The Glowworm feuilleton.*

"That is a woman in a thousand, sir," said the author of *The Long Strike.* "She has a heart of gold."

And I agreed with him.

"ON STRIKE" WEST AND EAST.

And as I am talking of things theatrical I may mention that some twenty years ago I wrote myself a domestic drama (I called it on the playbill "a social problem"), with the title of *On Strike.* If I may be permitted to criticise my own work, I may say it is not a bad little play, and was a great success when produced at the old Court Theatre. The cast included Messrs. Edgar Bruce, J. G. Hill, Walter

Fisher (husband of Miss Lottie Venne), Mrs. Stephens, and Mr. Alfred Bishop. It was distinctly written for the classes. The agitator was held up to scorn, and the working man, who played rather than laboured, to reprobation. However, it is a fact that when Miss Lytton's company went on tour, the aristocratic sentiments were more heartily cheered at the Standard, Shoreditch, than at the old Court Theatre in Sloane Square. The East-enders were just as much opposed to the loafing-do-nothing as their brothers of the West.

CABBY ON STRIKE IN '94.

To come to the strike that occurred five years ago. It commenced hurriedly. As a rule the Union of the trade or calling proposing to cease work takes some weeks to prepare for the operation. To be successful the strike must be general and hearty, and there must be sufficient funds in hand to support the strikers at least for a month or two. On the occasion to which I refer, the Union was scarcely in existence before it was called upon to conduct a very delicate negotiation. Then the cabmen, as a class, were never heartily in favour of the association. To say the least, opinions were divided. Then there seemed to be a very slenderly furnished fund available for paying the strikers, and lastly, there was no effort

made to collect funds sufficient in amount to make good deficiencies. Under these circumstances, considering that the cab proprietors or masters were represented by a very strong and compact organisation, the prospects of the drivers seemed anything rather than rose-coloured.

CABBY ON THE SITUATION.

One evening during the strike, as I was ordered to be "in attendance upon the ladies of my family" during a visit to one of the theatres, I seated myself next to the cabdriver on his box. This arrangement allowed me to smoke and to collect information.

"How about the strike?" I asked.

"A bad thing all round, sir," replied the driver; "it don't affect me as I drive my own cab, but it hits a lot of men who would work if they were allowed to."

"Who's in the wrong?"

"Well, I take it both, sir. It's very hard to make a living sometimes. I have known pals of mine for three days running not make a single penny for themselves. Yes, have to borrow money to make up the sum charged for the cab. Then, at other times, they have made a lot of money by five o'clock and gone home, after taking back their cab to the yard, cozily to tea."

This seemed in the mind of my friend to be the height of luxury.

"But what I most object to," continued Jehu, "is those swells going into business. I hear two young gentlemen in the Guards have started a couple of cabs. Or rather they would have done, but just as they were ready with stables in Pimlico, up comes the strike and spoils their little game!"

"But are there not too many drivers?" I asked.

"Yes, sir," was the response. "That's where it comes in. Anyone can be a driver nowadays. 'How would you go from Charing Cross to Ludgate Circus?' they ask at the Yard. 'By the Embankment.' 'Right you are—give him a licence.' That's how it's done, sir, and that's why there are so many of us."

"Do you think the masters make excessive profits?"

"Well, sir, it looks like it. I know a man with only a couple of cabs two years ago, and now he's got thirteen. And they were all bought out of the profits on the letting of the first couple. Now some of them pay 20 per cent., and surely that's too much, isn't it, sir?"

I did not answer. The driver was a sensible fellow and spoke with great moderation. Speaking personally, I repeat that I have always found the driving brotherhood a most civil and obliging class. For some years, when I was editing a weekly newspaper, a driver always turned up early on a

Sunday morning at Bouverie Street and waited for me until I was ready to be driven by him to the Belgrave Road. Sometimes he waited more than an hour, and for this accommodation I only paid him, by his own request, a shilling more than his bare fare. And if I had listened to him, sixpence would have been sufficient, but I preferred, in the cause of justice, to pay the shilling. And when he was away he always sent a substitute, who cheerfully adopted the arrangement. I dare say many journalists could tell a similar story.

From this I take it that cabmen are not overpaid, and whether they are or not, I wish them a satisfactory outcome from any difficulties that may be looming for them in the future.

CHAPTER XVIII.

LONDON FIRES.

DURING the last quarter of a century it is a perfect mercy that London has not been burned to the ground. On more than one occasion recently, a single fire has drawn all the available resources to its centre, to the terrible danger of the remainder of the metropolis. According to the report of the Chief Officer who has taken the place of my gallant but retired friend Captain Sir Eyre Shaw, it has been a perfect mercy, not to say a miracle, that the Great Fire of London has found no parallel in modern times. Over and over again we have been within an ace of seeing the great city reduced to ashes. Under these circumstances it may not be entirely out of place to devote a chapter to fires and how to extinguish them. It is certainly a matter that, for the safety of the public at large and Londoners in particular, should be carefully considered. The method should be acquired—the thing should be done.

FIRE BRIGADES AND PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

There used to be an expression much in vogue years ago that denoted the instruction of the juvenile—it was "teaching the young idea how to shoot." When I was a lad at school my head master, who was distinctly a man of notions, insisted upon the boys learning something about fires. In those days the appliances for extinguishing conflagrations (especially in the country) were of the simplest character. Felsted had no large town near it, within a radius of some six miles, and practically consisted of little more than the school. There was a village with a few shops, but the school overshadowed everything else with its handsome range of buildings, its chapel, its property in every direction. And the place, to the best of my belief, did not possess a fire engine. So when there was an alarm of fire in the neighbourhood (a not infrequent occurrence when quarter day was nigh in hard times, and farm labourers and their masters were discontented) we lads used to turn out *en masse* and hurry to the site of the blaze under the direction of the masters. We used to form into a double row of water bearers, the two ends resting one on the bank of the nearest pond, one close to the blazing building. The buckets used to be passed from hand to hand full and returned

empty. It was very primitive but not ineffective. Some of the pupils used to throw the water on the fire itself and became in time capital amateur *pompiers*. Over and over again have I partaken of the cakes which were sent to the school as some slight sign of grateful acknowledgment for services rendered.

FIRE DRILL FOR THE YOUNGSTERS.

And here it may be asked, why should not fire drill be taught at every school in the kingdom? Not only at the public schools but the board schools, and even at the infant schools. Children cannot commence too early to learn how to do a thing, and this is a matter of very great importance. And I would not make a distinction between the sexes. Why should not girls learn as well as boys? In a fire everyone should be of use, and if a girl is not strong enough to carry a bucket or draw along hose, she can at any rate learn to make herself valuable as a messenger or a signaller. Of course it is immensely important that there should be discipline, and fire drill like all other drills conduces to discipline. So even from this point of view it would be a most valuable institution.

WHY NOT ENGLISH POMPIERS?

I believe that volunteer firemen are very numerous in America, and we see large numbers of them in England. The object of the movement is of course admirable, and consequently it is a thousand pities that sometimes discredit is thrown on the force by the collection of subscriptions by persons whose claims to distinction are (to put it mildly) of an extremely slender character. It would be well if volunteer firemen could be put on the same footing with volunteer riflemen. In France and other countries they are treated as soldiers, and on emergency can be used as a military force. If the War Office could see its way to accepting the services of the English *pompiers*, and granting commissions to their officers, the scandals to which I have incidentally referred would disappear and become at once impossible. At the present moment the discipline of the various brigades is purely self-imposed. To become thoroughly effective the force require more than this, and the man who adopts my suggestion and works out the idea successfully will assuredly deserve well of his country. He will cover himself with distinction, and no doubt be offered a knighthood. As an alternative suggestion, why not make volunteers themselves *pompiers?* It would be an addition to

their duties that should not be, and I venture to say would not be, unpopular.

A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE OF THE LORD CHAMBERLAIN AND THE L.C.C.

At one time fires in London theatres were of frequent occurrence. There is scarcely a playhouse in London that has not been burned down twice or thrice. But of late years very few London theatres have fallen a victim to the flames. I think we may take it for granted that the much abused but occasionally useful London County Council has had something to do with bringing about this satisfactory result. The Lord Chamberlain, too, has had his say about the matter with good effect. Some little while ago I had personal experience of the zeal of both parties. In 1887 a theatrical entertainment with which I was connected had been given by invitation in the Hall of Gray's Inn. As it was, of course, a gratuitous performance no one could interfere with us—and by "us" I mean the Members of the Hon. Society of Gray's Inn. A few years later it was proposed to repeat the performance in the Hall of the Inner Temple, but, on this occasion, for a charitable object. Money having to be received at the doors it was necessary to get a licence. There was a long discussion as to whom had the right to grant the licence. The Lord Chamberlain insisted it should be

the London County Council, the London County Council repudiated the power and suggested the Lord Chamberlain. Ultimately, after an opinion upon the subject had been obtained from the Law Officers of the Crown, the Lord Chamberlain remained master of the field. It was decided that I should apply for and hold the licence. I made the application, but the late lamented Lord Lathom refused to grant it until I had obtained a certificate from the surveyor of the London County Council stating that the Inner Temple Hall was suitable for a theatrical performance, and reasonably safe from any danger of fire. The London County Council behaved most courteously (which was the more creditable as the Press had been abusing them under the impression that they had been putting obstacles in the way of our performance), and lent us their surveyor. That official was also a most amiable gentleman, and after condemning a gallery here, and ordering a door to be unhinged there, gave me the necessary certificate. I got the licence and the performances were a great success. And we did not lose the use of the gallery after all, for it was the opinion of those learned in the law that it might be used for those who had not paid for admission. So it was placed at the service of friends of the performers, and other privileged personages. From this it must not be imagined that I (who was primarily

responsible for the arrangement) thought the place unsafe. As a proof to the contrary, I may say that I was there myself when not engaged on the stage, and so was my noble and learned colleague the Lord Chancellor.

THE GREAT FIRE IN THE OLD BAILEY.

In the old days, when the headquarters of the London Fire Brigade used to be in Watling Street, I was a frequent visitor to the apartments of Sir Eyre Shaw. The late Chief Superintendent was in the habit of allowing some of his friends to act as volunteers, and on more than one occasion I was of the number. In those days every man in the force was a sailor, with the solitary exception of the driver of the captain's cart. All the men were teetotalers. Since Sir Eyre resigned my connection with fires has been extremely limited. The last I attended was two or three years ago. I had been dining in Bouverie Street at a famous literary dinner, when there was a cry that a fire had broken out in the neighbourhood. The sparks were floating over Bouverie Street and falling in the roadway. An artistic colleague of mine volunteered to come with me, and we started for the scene of conflagration. We found the block of buildings close to the Old Bailey and Ludgate Hill "well ablaze." My ticket as a Member of the Institute of Journalists passed

us through the cordon of police, and we might have gone anywhere and seen anything. The fire was got under after awhile, but not quickly enough to satisfy my artistic colleague.

"Had it been in America," said he, "they would have put it out in less than no time. But there, they have got no water-towers over here!"

From which I took it that water-towers must be something particularly choice in the shape of fire extinguishers.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

In conclusion, it seems to me that not only do we require an increased Brigade under the London County Council (that is admitted) but also organisation for auxiliary assistance. There is no reason why volunteer firemanships should not be as popular in England as in America. There is plenty of pluck among Britons, and the fireman who is worth his salt must have a fair share of that excellent (may I call it?) quality. Discipline, coolness, and courage are all to be had for the asking. So the sooner the Government begins to work up the raw material into the requisite composition, the better will it be for the nation in general and the metropolis of that nation in particular. The Fire Brigade is still in want of further development at the end of the nineteenth century.

CHAPTER XIX.

PALL MALL AND PRIVATE THOMAS ATKINS.

LONDONERS have always taken an interest in the Army, and no account of the Modern Babylon would be complete without a reference to Tommy Atkins as seen through metropolitan spectacles. The Autumn Manœuvres had their inception in Pall Mall and have grown during the last half century.

THE CAMP AT CHOBHAM.

The first idea of the sort was (I fancy) associated with the camp of Chobham a short while before the Crimean War. Until then we had no thought of tactics, and even the great Duke of Wellington expressed his doubts about the possibility of getting ten thousand men in or out of the Park viâ Hyde Park Corner. Nowadays, the heroes of a hundred fights would be greatly astounded to see the ease with which

the unemployed invade the Row and Piccadilly. If the volunteer movement has taught us nothing else, at least it has instructed us in the art of moving about in fours and columns. The camp at Chobham was the first rough notion of the coming school of Aldershot. We were just recovering from "the First Exhibition of '51 Millennium," when it was supposed that war (except, perhaps, on the stage and in the circus of Astley's) had become obsolete. Certainly, we had some slight trouble in various parts of our colonial possessions, but that was only in connection with "the niggers." And under the generic term of "niggers" we included all sorts and conditions of coloured men. Under this category we classed Indians (West and natives of Hindostan), New Zealanders, Hottentots, Zulus, and copper-coloured heroes of Cooper's romances. That Europeans would quarrel after Sir Joseph Paxton had built a gigantic conservatory and "the Commissioners of 1851" had awarded prize medals to the manufacturers of soaps, pianofortes, biscuits, and locomotives, seemed to us simply a ridiculous impossibility. Still, there was no harm to play at soldiers, and the camp at Chobham was the outcome of the inclination. The military gathering on the Surrey downs produced a profound sensation. It was quite "the thing to do" to take tea with the military, and John Leech in the pages of *Punch* showed how things were done in the shape of hospitality by

the gallant defenders of our never-to-be-anything-but-at-peaceful country.

KEELEY AND LEIGH MURRAY AT THE OLYMPIC.

The camp at Chobham supplied the title for a play at the Olympic, which I class amongst the earliest of my "Green-room Recollections." The cast included Robert Keeley and Leigh Murray, and, I fancy, Miss Charlotte Sanders. But of the lady I am not at all sure. I rather think I am talking of a period long before her time—the palmy days of the Strand Theatre, when Jimmy Rogers and Johnnie Clark used to share with Patty Oliver, Marie Wilton, and the actress I have just mentioned, the honours of the evening. But I distinctly recollect that Leigh Murray, the elegant light comedian, appeared in the undress uniform of a cavalry officer and pitched his tent in Mr. Keeley's front garden. Then Mr. Keeley himself appeared in a dressing-gown to secure the decease of an early-crowing fowl. I do not remember the plot, but I suppose he must have been a guardian of the walking lady who had attracted the affectionate regards of the uniformed Leigh Murray. And here I am reminded that thirty or forty years ago an officer of the British army never appeared without his regimentals—on the stage. I have quite forgotten the name of the walking lady of the period, but fancy she was called Miss Katherine Rogers. No doubt *The*

Camp at Chobham is in one of the volumes of "Lacy's Acting Edition." I do not think that Mrs. Keeley was in the cast, although she appeared about this time at the Olympic with her husband in a farce founded upon the Licensing Act, called *Bonâ fide Travellers.*

THE MILITIA AT THE FIRST MANŒUVRES.

But pieces at the Olympic of 1853 (or thereabouts) have not much to do with the Autumn Manœuvres of the present time. A subject much nearer home is the way things were done in 1872, just twenty-seven years ago. I had the honour of taking part in the first series of Autumn Manœuvres, which were held in the neighbourhood of Aldershot. I was a lad in those distant days, but had the pleasure of being a subaltern in charge of a company in the Militia. The battalion to which I belonged was selected for manœuvring, and sent from the suburbs of the metropolis to the wilds of Cove Common. We knew of our destination long before we received the official information from Pall Mall. An enterprising firm of outfitters in Aldershot sent us a circular giving us the prices for camp furniture. This was the herald of what was to follow. My regiment had not been permanently embodied since the Mutiny, and consequently the battalion had a considerable sum standing to its credit at the Army Agents'. In spite of an in-

creased subscription for the year, we had to dip into our reserve to the tune, or, perhaps, I should say more appropriately, regimental march of several hundreds of pounds. We had, amongst other things, to hire a mess tent, the one provided by the War Office being utterly out of proportion with our requirements. From a financial point of view sending the Militia to the Autumn Manœuvres in those days spelt disaster. And I am not at all sure that the course was entirely beneficial, even from a military point of view. We had six weeks on Cove Common before we made a move, and it was during those forty-two days we were supposed to get into shape. But this was not an easy task. When at home in our barrack square we had our squad, company, and battalion drill, with just enough musketry to make things interesting. But at Aldershot we were for ever being called away from our work to attend brigade drill or to take part in a march out. Our general, too, had rather a small opinion of our (regimental) honesty. He assumed that nearly every militiaman spent a month with the colours and the rest of the time in the hands of "the civil power."

THE HONESTY OF THE OLD CONSTITUTIONAL FORCE.

As a matter of fact, this slur upon the conscientiousness of the regiment, and, I may say the force, was

entirely undeserved. Our fellows were exceedingly good fellows, and as honest as the day. It was only when their devotion to their officers was tested that their fidelity to their superiors outweighed their appreciation of the exact value of the words *meum* and *tuum*. For instance, on one occasion, after a weary march of over twenty miles, we were ordered to pitch our tents for the night. We had on either side of us line regiments. As a zealous officer I saw that the tents of my company were pitched before I looked after my own. When the time came for the erection of my modest marquee I found that we had exhausted our tent pegs—there was not one to be found.

"Never mind, Capting," said one of my men; "you wait and you will see it will be all right."

And it was. When I returned after mess to my tent I found it held down with an absolute plethora of pegs. How they got there I do not know, but as I heard shrieks in the course of the night from the lines of the two service battalions (where the tents were falling like displaced ninepins) I suspect that after I left them that my men must have gone foraging. But, as I asked no questions subsequently, I had no opportunity of hearing any statement, true or otherwise.

And I am reminded by this experience that things are not so comfortable nowadays as in the past. A man was allowed to dig a trench round his tent a

quarter of a century ago. This permission is now withdrawn, a bad regulation in rainy weather.

MISTAKES IN THE PAST.

No doubt some other matters are better managed than they were in 1872. In that year the great breakdown was the transport. The Government had hired waggons, and the drivers were civilians, and under imperfect control. The horses were in many cases overworked, and could scarcely drag their carts. I happened to be in charge of the baggage-guard on one memorable occasion when the troops arrived hours before their tents. We could not get on. It was exceedingly hilly country, and the poor horses could not move. We had to requisition the assistance of the artillery to get along at all. Some horses from one of the guns were told off to help us, and served as leaders to the hired wheelers in the shafts. The next morning, after we had pitched our tents anyhow and anywhere, the encampment was a sight to see! The only "dressing" to be had came from the Duke of Cambridge, then the officer Commanding in Chief the British Army. Men had to find their way to their lines as best they could. A song might have been appropriately composed for the occasion, and called "When you want to know your camp ask

a sentry." As one of the officers in command of the baggage-guard, I was called upon to furnish a report. I did; letting the Government have it right and left. I have a sort of notion that this document (which would have made an excellent leading article) stood in the way of my promotion. I do not wish to suggest anything in the least offensive to the authorities in Pall Mall, but I cannot help calling attention to the fact that to this day I am *not* a General of Militia.

QUITE A LITTLE HOLIDAY FOR OFFICERS AND MEN.

Recently the Regulars have had the manœuvres to themselves. Of course, everything was carefully thought out. They fought their fight with the minimum of chance, and, victorious or defeated, the rival armies knew where to encamp for the night and where to get water. There were no difficulties about supplies, and the commissariat was perfect. During one set of manœuvres the Prince of Wales, who was out with his cavalry regiment, was taken prisoner by some enterprising privates belonging to the old Constitutional Force. One-and-twenty years ago the Commander of the Blues, considering the day of hostilities to commence immediately after midnight, dashed off in that early moment of the morning and nearly terminated the campaign by taking everyone

prisoner. However, I believe he was sent back with a flea in his ear, and informed that he was "slightly premature." Warfare was not expected to commence before 8 a.m.! Again, the damage to the crops has been less, and the transport, of course, has been all that can be desired. Even the dipping of the colours is easier and more effective. Of late years the regimental flags have decreased in size, and it is possible to be graceful in dipping them to Royalty, even when the hired charger of the senior Major is restive and inclined to take post in the front rank of A company. No doubt the Autumn Manœuvres and the Short Service system have had much to do with the creation of that admirable army which has recently gained such distinction in Africa—North and South.

CHAPTER XX.

CONCERNING THE LONDON VOLUNTEERS.

EASTER Sunday and Monday for the last twenty years or so have been invariably associated with the Volunteers. Not so very long ago the Review was one of the features of the military year. But of late it has become the fashion to "cry down" the credit of the force, and to assume that the two hundred thousand men forming the Citizen Army of England are merely a weapon-carrying mob. I fancy that this has been the fault to a great extent of the Volunteers themselves. They have been so ready to take for granted that "professional" opinion must be right that they have ignored their own common-sense. I have often been amused at seeing a Colonel of Volunteers of twenty years' service—a man who has passed the school at the Wellington Barracks and has earned the "T" for tactics—absolutely hanging on the words of some subaltern of scarcely six

months' standing. And when I say amused, I might almost add ashamed. The Colonel of Volunteers is impressed with the "regular." But of late the "snubbing" to which I have referred, if not on the decrease, is being mitigated by what may be termed "honourable compensation." Some little while ago officers of twenty years' service received a decoration, then it was extended to sergeants, now it is to be given to corporals, lance-corporals, and the rank and file. The snubbing is the brimstone and the decoration is the treacle. But, unfortunately, the brimstone dealt out to our Volunteers is scarcely likely to be more useful to our riflemen than the same nauseous medicine was to the scholars of Dotheboys Hall. However, as Volunteers and their work are at the moment well to the fore, thanks to the absence of the regulars on active service, it may not be out of place to devote a few pages to the consideration of the merits of these martial Londoners as we find them at the end of the century.

THE DAYS OF THE FIRST VOLUNTEERS.

Of course all the world knows (and by the phrase I refer chiefly to the *habitués* of the Reading-Room at the British Museum) that in the early years of 1800 the Volunteers were immensely useful in dispelling the scare raised by the rumour that we

were about to be invaded by the French. In spite of the paucity in our numbers as compared with our population of to-day, we managed to gather together a host of men. The force in London alone compared favourably with our existing Metropolitan Volunteer Corps. A short while ago I had occasion to glance through an old Army List published before the century departed had reached its teens, and was surprised to find that all the "Loyal Volunteers" had their full complement of officers. There was no difficulty in getting men to accept commissions eighty or ninety years ago, and many a portrait of a grandfather or great-grandfather in full regimentals, honoured by members of the present generation, affords evidence that the recipients of the King's favours were not ashamed of their uniforms. Gentlemen of various professions joined the ranks and worked their way up to the silver epaulettes. They did not seem to consider that they were doing more than their duty, and it is interesting to note that although the militia sometimes came in for the hard rubs of the caricaturists, the volunteers were allowed to go Scot free. It was assumed, and I think rightly assumed, that if a man took the trouble to find time from his general legitimate work to make himself efficient for the defence of his native land he deserved well of his country. The scare died away, and with it the "Loyal Volunteers." The corps disappeared

from the army lists, and the old colours found a resting-place in the churches. Not very long ago I came across a number of flags in St. Luke's (the old St. Luke's), Chelsea, close to Battersea Bridge. They had been there for more than half a century, and, hearing that the Queen's Westminsters might possibly be able to lay claim to their reversion, I called the attention of Colonel Sir Howard Vincent to their existence. If they are still at St. Luke's, or have been removed, I know not, but I have no doubt that a diligent search would assist in the discovery of a number of other colours that have fluttered in the breezes of Hyde Park in the days of the Georges.

THE ANSWER TO THE PRINCE DE JOINVILLE SCARE.

Later on there was another attempted revival. The Prince de Joinville in the time of Louis Philippe, King of the French, threatened "the perfidious Albion" with a hostile visit. It was at a time when "Dicky" Doyle was delighting the readers of *Punch* with those charming pictures of the manners and customs of the English, to which poor "Professor" Percival Leigh in his "Mr. Pipp's Diary," furnished the letterpress. Mr. Doyle showed in a panorama how the French army would leave France to suffer the tortures of *mal de mer* in the Channel, how "the

Iron Duke" would watch their movements through a telescope from a Martello tower, how, on their arrival in London "Monsieur Jullien" would be arrested, how 85, Fleet Street, would be besieged, and how the entire French army would have to retreat, hotly pursued by *Mr. Punch* and his dog Toby. That was the tone that was taken about a French invasion some fifty years ago, and on the whole it was not an entirely satisfactory tone. Its result was much good-natured chaff when the Volunteer movement again appeared. About 1850 rifle corps were proposed, and John Leech and his *collaborateur*, the author of the "Comic History of England," laughed "the movement" out of court by their admirable series of "The Brook Green Volunteer." We were not prepared to take things too seriously in those days, and were inclined to believe that the Regulars in their white ducks on the First of May were quite sufficient to meet all military requirements.

THE REVIVAL OF 1860.

It may be possible that the merry treatment that the solitary defender of Brook Green received at the pen and pencil of his biographers made people a little nervous about a revival. I think that Captain Hans Busk was the first to suggest the establish-

ment of Rifle clubs. He did not venture at first to carry his idea any further. There were to be rifle clubs where men should fire at targets representing enemies instead of potting clay balls in lieu of pigeons. The clubs were a great success, and very shortly after their inauguration the brilliant notion occurred to someone to convert them into regiments. From that moment to this the Volunteers have flourished. They have had their ups and downs. They have been chaffed, but they have lived it down. In *Pictures from "Punch"* there are several specimens of the humour that found its subject in the doings of the Volunteers. The reason that a more encouraging tone was adopted later on is possibly attributable to the fact that Charles Keene was a private in the Artists' corps and Tom Taylor a captain in the Civil Service Rifles. Be this as it may, there is no doubt that *Mr. Punch* ever since 1860 has done his level best to support the Volunteers, and with excellent results. "The Sage of Fleet Street" usually sets the fashion, and certainly in this case the mode has been followed by all his more serious contemporaries. John Leech often sketched the riflemen after their revival, but the Brook Green Private was never reproduced. And *à propos* of this series, I may note that Gilbert Abbott à Beckett, the author of the "Comic History of England," was himself the son of an officer of

Volunteers. His father was a captain in the St. James's Corps in 1810.

THE BAPTISM OF HARD WORK.

And now we come to the present time. As luck will have it I have had an opportunity of seeing something of volunteering, first in England and next in France. In the days when an officer of the Militia could also hold a commission in "another place," I commanded a small corps. I can speak with confidence of the sincere efforts that my gunners made to become worthy of the title of soldiers. Both commanders and commanded took an infinity of pains to learn their duties. Men become Volunteers because they are born soldiers. No man joins the ranks, either commissioned or non-commissioned, unless he really loves the profession of arms. Very often the Service "Tommy Atkins" joins in a moment of pique, and frequently regrets his action within a month of its occurrence. He has been crossed in love if he is a clodhopper; he wants to spite his relatives if he is a "gentleman born." In the latter case he begs his father to buy him off when he finds his barrack life rougher than he anticipated. The best thing his father can do is to sternly refuse to assist him for at least a year. After he has had twelve months of "stables," or "fatigue duty," he

will be cured of the "scarlet fever." If his discharge is purchased within the statutory time for a reduction, on the next occasion he will enlist again. If the lad has really something in him, it is not impossible that he may work his way up from the rank and file into the sergeants' mess, and ultimately into the officers' ante-room. If he has not, why, then let the boy have a good "bucketing." A year's work in a regiment will do him a world of good and not an inch of harm.

VOLUNTEERS IN NAME AND DEED.

However, it is not the "hard bargains" of the service who join the volunteers, but men who would make their way anywhere. Many give for love what is in the other class extorted by fear. And here I am reminded of a conversation I once had with a young German during the war of 1870-71. We were in a railway carriage travelling between Cologne and Coblentz, and my companion was full of abuse of everything British. We had no army, no fleet, "no nothing." He abused our soldiers as slaves.

"Come," said I at last, "they are not quite that. They are all volunteers."

When I had more fully explained he was absolutely astounded. Did I really mean that every soldier in the British forces was a warrior by his own choice?

I acquiesced. Then he was silent for quite a quarter of an hour.

"I beg your pardon," said he at last, in a subdued tone, "but can you tell me how a German can become naturalised?"

As for the fighting qualities of the Volunteers I can say that the hastily raised troops of the French during the great war acquitted themselves as well, and better, than the regular army. Again, the Americans on both sides—Federal and Confederate—fought gallantly, although two-thirds of them were the rawest of raw recruits. Lord Wolseley has said somewhere that the discipline of an ordinary militia regiment is quite good enough to serve as a model for the entire service when an army is in the field. The marching of the Guards is a thing of beauty and a joy for ever, but something more is required before the enemy. That something more is obtained in a very short space of time. Only recently we have heard of the admirable conduct of Volunteers in Africa. It does not require much "polishing" to make a citizen soldier into a first-rate "fighting-man."

AMATEURS AND PROFESSIONALS.

But to leave generalities to come to particulars. On two distinct occasions the Rifles have shown themselves to be excellent troops. A few years ago

the Canadian Volunteers gave a good account of the Fenians, and a little later the Post Office Volunteers sent an admirably disciplined force to Egypt. And more recently our Colonial Volunteers have worked wonders in our Cape possessions.

The German system has shown us how a man who has had a *soupçon* of military training as a lad can be recalled to the colours in middle age and become a first-class warrior. The moment hostilities broke out between Prussia and France, hundreds of quiet sober young clerks threw up their situations in London and hurried away to the Fatherland. They proved themselves thoroughly capable as cavalry, infantry, and artillery, and I venture to think that if the volunteers were called to the colours in defence of their native land they would be equally reliable. Under these circumstances it seems a folly, a shame, a crime, to "snub" our citizen soldiers. Nothing kills so surely as ridicule. The comic papers are more merciful than the officials of the War Office. If there is a field day regulars are given the principal commands, and the Volunteers' "C.O.s" are left in the cold. This is one of the many grievances that should meet with redress. In spite of C.B.'s (Civil) and long service medals the citizens are distinctly snubbed. Of course an invasion would set everything to rights, but that is a blessing that we would not desire. Until the days of disaster arrive, then, the

Volunteers must be accepted on trust. They are certainly a very fine body of men. And here before I conclude these brief remarks I may refer to the proposed Ladies' Ambulance Corps. The members of this novel gathering are not only to act as nurses in the hospital but soldiers in the field. They are emphatically to hold their own. I cannot help thinking that the idea is a mistake. When I was in France and Germany during the war I saw a good deal of the "Sisters." Of course, amongst them were some conscientious, self-sacrificing persons. But there were exceptions (possibly proving the rule) in the shape of a few fussy and tiresome females. These ladies were anything rather than popular with the doctors, and, I must add, anything rather than popular with the patients. It appears to me that Amazons may be all very well at a music-hall, but will be decidedly out of place at the seat of war.

In conclusion, may the London Volunteers increase and prosper. Let not the citizen soldier be ridden rough-shod by the regular. After all, they are both Englishmen, and the amateur is frequently the equal of the professional. This is true enough with cricket; then why not with soldiering?

CHAPTER XXI.

SERVING WITH THE LONDON MILITIA.

IN the spring of the year the newspapers are full of accounts of the trainings of the battalions of Militia. As a rule the press notices are extremely brief. The public are told that so many regiments have been called up for the customary twenty-seven days of service with the colours, and so many having performed their allotted duty, have been dismissed to their hearths and homes. Some of the professional organs of the Constitutional Force give a few details, such as "the 4th Royal Blankshire have had their annual inspection," and the "12th Rifle Brigade (Prince Consort's Own) have been sent to Aldershot," but as a rule, even the avowedly military journals are a trifle reticent of the doings of "the first line of the reserve." But it is a notable fact that the end of the century finds half the Constitutional Force embodied.

OBTAINING A COMMISSION.

It is not a difficult matter to get a commission in the Militia. A lad must know a commanding officer,

must have a clean bill of health from the authorities of his school, and be generally a good fellow, and a sub-lieutenancy follows on application as a matter of course. I myself have had the honour of serving in two regiments—one a metropolitan corps, and the other with its headquarters in the country. My brother officers in both battalions belonged to the same class of men. In the town regiment many of the captains had been in the service, and our colonel had also, as a lieutenant, worn the gold lace prior to its adoption by the Militia. In the county battalion most of our men (like the rank and file) were country born. During the twenty-seven days of our training they were intensely military, and quite as smart as the majority of their brothers in the service battalions. I noticed that what may be termed the civilian officers (to distinguish them from their ex-service colleagues), were, as a whole, more zealous than their ex-professional brethren. When I first obtained my company, after some ten years' faithful service as a subaltern, a great influx of the recently-retired were drafted into the commissioned ranks. At first the newcomers took much interest in the proceedings of the men on parade, but when they found that Militiamen were a little slow in "forming fours" or "advancing in column," they seemed to lose heart in their work, and became as slovenly as the men they had been sent to command. The native Militia

officers, so far from deteriorating as the training became older, on the contrary, gradually improved. They rubbed off their rust in the first week, and by the fourth were as bright and as sharp as newly-burnished needles. The civilians began at their worst and ended at their best, whilst the ex-warriors reversed the operation. Under these circumstances, were I a commanding officer of a Militia regiment (which I frankly admit I am not), I would prefer civilians to ex-soldiers. Possibly the fact that I was a civilian officer myself has made me take a prejudiced view of the subject. But I will not go beyond "perhaps."

TOWN V. COUNTRY.

It has often been my lot to be asked by some youngster thirsting for as much military glory as can be obtained at Aldershot or some other spot within the British Islands, "which should he choose, town or country?" My answer has depended on circumstances. If the boy has belonged to a county family I have suggested that he should become a son of the soil. There is no bond of union between neighbours so pleasant as the regimental tie of the local Yeomanry or the Militia. But if the budding Wellington hails from Cockayne let him join one of the London regiments. There are several particularly smart battalions, the Royal Fusiliers, the East Surrey,

but for choice, I take the 5th and 7th Rifle Brigade. The last has been immortalised by the late Charles Keene in the pages of *Punch*. The best of our draughtsmen drew a diminutive Militiaman accosting an adjutant. Said the officer to the private: "And who may you be?" Returned the private to the officer: "Please, sir, I'm the 7th Battalion of the Rifle Brigade, Prince Consort's Own, better known as the Tower 'Amlets Milishy!" And very fine fellows the "Tower 'Amlets Milishy" are, were (and if I may presume on a prophecy), ever will be. And as one regiment is as good as another perhaps, I, in referring to the Militia, may confine my remarks to this distinguished regiment, as I had the honour for many years of serving in its commissioned ranks.

A TRUE STORY OF "THE MILISHY."

When I joined, the first story that was told me at mess was a legend connected with the embodiment of the regiment during the Indian Mutiny. It was in a splendid state of efficiency when a second battalion was added to the 24th, and a number of raw recruits were sent to Aldershot to occupy the lines close to where the King's Own Light Infantry (as the Tower Hamlets were called forty years ago) were stationed. On a Christmas Day a quarrel arose between the King's Own and the 24th as to the respective merits

of the dinners supplied to each regiment. The 24th ran to their quarters, seized their guns and ammunition and blazed away on their brethren in the Militia. The King's Own stood the fire unflinchingly, but did not retaliate. The Second 24th were marched out of camp, and the Duke subsequently informed them that had he his way he would send them to a spot not recognised by the Queen's regulations. "But," said H.R.H. "as I cannot send you there you shall go to the next best place, the Mauritius." And off went the Second 24th, and remained away from England many years. Since then the 24th have never met the K.O.L.I.M., but the old feud is kept up, or was until very recently. It would be still, I fancy, a dangerous matter to put the two battalions in adjoining lines. I will undertake to say that the Militia have not forgotten the old quarrel, and I will be bound that the incident, nearly half a century old, is still fresh in the memory of the Second 24th.

A FALSE STORY OF "THE MILISHY."

And having told a true story about the K.O.L.I.M. I may relate one that I know to be false. As a matter of fact there was never a steadier body of men than the rank and file of that renowned corps. While I had the honour of being an officer on full pay (for twenty-seven days a

year) we received votes of thanks from the aristocracy, gentry, and inhabitants of Hackney for our lamb-like conduct whilst protecting Dalston from "the hoofs of the ruthless invader." Still, in spite of this testimonial to our respectability, we had a reputation (amongst the ignorant and malicious) of being occasionally doubtful about the exact value of the words *meum* and *tuum*.

Possibly it was because we suffered from this unjust stigma that a detective once presented himself when the regiment was on parade and asked permission to examine the ranks with a view to discovering a gentleman belonging to "ours" who was wanted by "the civil power." Permission being given to the detective, that worthy representative of Scotland Yard, accompanied by the adjutant of the regiment, made the tour of the various companies, front rank and rear rank. When the official had got to the last man of the rear rank of the rear company, he stopped suddenly and gazed earnestly at the rather embarrassed warrior who by position was on the left of the column.

"Why, you surely have made a mistake!" exclaimed the adjutant indignantly. "Why, you have pitched on the best man in the battalion. He has been with us for more than twenty years and he is our pattern soldier. His arms are a mass of good conduct badges, and he is the example of all that is

best in the life of a soldier. You surely do not know him?"

"No," replied the detective, "I do not—*but I know all the others!*"

This story in military circles will be regarded as a "chestnut." And I must admit that it has not even the "additional advantage" of being true.

"TOMMY ATKINS" IN RESERVE.

It has been of late the fashion to cry up "Tommy Atkins," and I must confess that my knowledge of the gentleman, as represented in the old Constitutional Force, is distinctly in his favour. Take them all in all our soldiers are an excellent set of fellows. Treated well they will go anywhere and do anything. During one of the trainings we were stationed at Aldershot, and for our sins were sent on a flying column. Sometimes we had to march thirty miles a day and not one of our lads (off duty they were costers) would knock off and seek shelter in the ambulance cart. One man in my own company was sent by the doctor to the rear because he had a sore foot, but when we came into camp there was the wounded gentleman tramping by the side of the ambulance cart, and pretending to be guarding it. He had stoutly refused to enter it.

"Leave that sort of game," said my gentleman,

"to those beggars," and he pointed with scorn to a cart-load of Guardsmen who had broken down under the stress of the intense heat and the heavy marching.

"They may have their faults, sir," said my sergeant to me, "far be it from me to deny it, but they are good plucked ones!"

And so they were.

SUMMING UP.

Did space permit I could (to the great distress of my readers) write pages about my pet Metropolitan Militiamen. But I must desist and be practical. I would strongly advise every parent with a lad who can spare a month a year, to let him take it out in the old Constitutional Force. It need not be very expensive. The uniform, carefully chosen, should not cost more than a fifty pound note, and the pay and allowances should go a long way towards liquidating the cost of the training. Of course, on joining the newcomer will have to pay an entrance fee in the shape of a contribution to the Regimental Fund, and every year there are payments regulated by his rank. But if he does not take much wine at mess, and has the nerve to avoid useless extravagance, he should pull through without materially lessening his parents' banking account. Of course there are regiments and regiments. If the battalion

is entertained, and entertain, all the officers, without exception, must bear the cost. But a quiet London battalion—especially if sent to Aldershot—should be within the means of almost anyone. All that a lad requires is good health and good temper. If he has these requisites, I will warrant that he will find a training in the Militia—with its wholesome discipline and its tone of service chivalry—the most delightful of experiences.

At least I know that when I was in the service I did.

CHAPTER XXII.

LONDON GUNNERS AT SHOEBURYNESS.

ONCE a year the artillery Volunteers hold their annual meeting at Shoeburyness. The newspapers at the time have entered the "silly season," and find room to record the doings of the gunners, and it is instructive to note how much less space is devoted to Shoeburyness than is reserved for Bisley. And yet of the two meetings I should say (and I believe that most professional soldiers would agree with me) that the competition on the Essex coast is the more important. But there is no doubt about it, the infantry arm of the Volunteer service is *the* popular branch. Not only with civilians, but with our citizen soldiers themselves. This is easily proved by statistics. I have not the figures at hand, but I believe that out of the whole number of our enrolled volunteers only about a fifth are gunners. This is not surprising, as the

infantry have more chances of showing themselves in public than their "scientific" comrades. The policy of the authorities is nowadays to keep the artillery to their field-pieces or guns of position. Thus marching out and battalion drill, the delight of the "foot soldiers," are discountenanced in favour of service at the batteries and work at "repository."

THE LATE LORD TENNYSON AS A VOLUNTEER ARTILLERYMAN.

I fancy that if we distinguish amongst the Volunteers we shall find that the gunners are more earnest than their less gifted comrades. I possibly have a slight bias in favour of the gunners, as many years ago I had the honour to command a regiment of Volunteer artillery. It was in the early days of the movement, when batteries, battalions and brigades were small but not particularly compact. My corps consisted of a couple of batteries, with a permission from the War Office to raise a third battery. The regiment had been founded by a gentleman who was connected with literature, and when I took over the command I had amongst my men no less a person than the late Lord Tennyson. The Poet Laureate never appeared on parade, but he showed his good will to the corps by writing some stirring lines, that were set to music, in praise of the guns. These

verses were never publicly acknowledged, and were signed "T.," but, for all that, they were known to have emanated from the pen that had given to the world "The Idylls of the King." I was sorry that I was never able to receive the salute of Gunner Tennyson, for I am sure he would have looked remarkably well in our uniform. Leaving the H.A.C. out of the question, we were the only regiment of Horse Artillery. As a matter of fact, I do not think we ever appeared in full rig. Although harness was served out to us by the War Office, and we had the right to wear plumes or "shaving brushes" in our busbies, we never horsed our guns. When I had the honour of taking over the command we were acting as infantry, or perhaps I may say garrison artillery. One of my batteries rejoiced in the possession of a "dummy gun," and that was the extent of our ordnance. However, for all that and all that, "Alfred Tennyson, Esq., Poet Laureate" was on the strength of the regiment, and although he was not exactly "efficient," we were very proud of him.

GOING TO SCHOOL AT WOOLWICH.

When I was in command I duly qualified myself for duties by passing "the School at Woolwich." At the time I was at "the headquarters of Ubique," the Duke of Connaught, then a captain in the Rifle Bri-

gade, was learning gun drill with a neighbouring detachment. Some new breech-loaders had been recently introduced into the service, and consequently H.R.H., although he had served as a subaltern in the scientific branch, had been sent to school to learn all about them. In those days, to get a certificate an officer was required to know the drill of every gun in the force, besides the ordinary "red book" literature. I believe of late this regulation has been relaxed, and an auxiliary gunner is only asked to get up the drill of the gun with which his own corps is furnished. The course in my days took rather over a month. The members of the class wore "jumpers" and worked like niggers. Repository drill was particularly trying. The practice of "parbuckling" and raising guns with the assistance of a gin are terribly fatiguing. After many years, I look back with pride to the days when I was capable of such physical exertion. Really and truly, my work was as hard as that of a mender of roads or a bricklayer. Thinking over the matter, it seems to me that the course was conducted on the Squeers principle. It will be remembered that that eminent pedagogue used to teach his pupils how to spell "winders" and then set them to clean them.

"What is parbuckling?" asked the schoolmaster at Woolwich.

"A method by which guns can be dismounted from

one carriage and placed on another," replied the scholar, with more or less accuracy.

"Quite so," replied Teacher War Office, "and now go and parbuckle."

And the scholar obeyed his instructions.

When I was at Woolwich the General in command used now and again to attend our class and put us on to some problem or other. On one occasion I was singled out for this distinction.

"Captain à Beckett," said my C.O., "will you be so good as to tell me what you would do under the following circumstances? You have a gun yoked to oxen. You are passing a gate, and the wheels of the carriage are stopped by the posts. What, sir, would you do under those circumstances?"

"Remove the posts, sir."

"Can't, sir—the posts are immovable."

"Well, take the wheel off the gun, sir."

"Can't, sir; you can't get at it."

"Take off the gun itself, sir."

"Won't do, sir; the gun is as inaccessible as the wheel."

"Well, sir, back the oxen until the gun is clear."

"Can't, sir; oxen won't back."

"Then what ought I to do, sir?"

"Can't say, sir. I am here to ask questions and not to answer them!"

So my curiosity was never satisfied. If to-morrow

I found myself in the suggested dilemma I should not know how to act beyond resigning on the spot and going home to tea! Possibly one of my military readers can solve the problem for himself. The commandant of the school to which I referred was unequal to the task.

A RECOLLECTION OF SHOEBURYNESS.

To return to Shoeburyness. There is no doubt that the discipline and work at the meeting are both admirable. In the days of Wimbledon, when the Volunteers certainly took matters calmly, the contrast between Surrey and Essex was most remarkable. But even now, when the National Rifle Association has changed its quarters, there is no comparison between the gunners and the sharpshooters. At Shoeburyness there is a discipline in the air. There is not much to choose between the silver lace and the gold, the white and the yellow. Years ago I took part in a meeting of the N.A.A., and was delighted with the outing. As I was not entered for any competition I was used merely as a regimental officer, and invited to make myself generally useful. On one occasion I was in command of a range party, whose duty it was to ascertain and signal the various shots as they hit or missed the target. We were put on our stage (in mid ocean) at seven in the morning and kept there

until late at night. It was delightfully fresh and appetite-increasing. At mid-day the guns at the batteries ceased firing, and everyone went to lunch. When I write "everyone," I mean all those on shore. We poor people at the ranges were entirely forgotten. However, when the batteries after the interval desired a record of their firing, I refused to gratify their wishes until our creature comforts had received adequate attention. I accordingly signalled "lunch" to all applications to know "What's the matter?" until the necessary meal had been supplied. Subsequently, being required to give my "reasons in writing" for my conduct, I wrote a "leading article" sort of a report, in which I set forth that as I had not been supplied with food, the men under my command, exposed to the exhausting rays of the sun, would have probably become victims to "stroke" and possibly to "collapse"—hence my demand for lunch. I was subsequently officially informed that my explanation was "satisfactory."

"GUNS TO THE FRONT."

There can be no doubt that in case of "national emergency" the Volunteer artillery would be immediately useful. Their discipline is extremely good, and they at once would become of considerable value behind earthworks. As garrison gunners I think most

experts would admit they would be able to take post with regulars. They, of course, could serve the guns every bit as well as their professional comrades. The War Office has done its best to discourage field batteries, and I think to some extent, not unwisely. Behind earthworks the Volunteer gunners, as I have said, would be equal to any troops similarly situated in the wide world. But in the open the matter might be different. It is in this that the value of discipline (acquired morning, noon and night) becomes fully apparent. To be able to face a rain of bullets unmoved, when the enemy is out of sight and smokeless powder is the order of the day, is a feat that cannot be acquired in a "brace of shakes," nor yet in five minutes. No doubt the Volunteers would show pluck when the time came, but they would show it with less inconvenience were they to acquire the knack with the aid of adequate discipline. Behind earthworks the serving of guns is purely mechanical, so it will be seen at a glance how immensely valuable our Volunteer artillerymen will be when they are told off to relieve the regulars at our coast defences. All they will have to do will be to fire straight. And that art they acquire, thanks to the organisation of the National Artillery Association. So it is our duty as well as our inclination to wish that hard-working and useful body every success.

And we do. But as Lord Roberts has suggested,

wishes are less valuable than money. And this saying should be laid to heart by those patrons of Bisley, who, after giving any number of prizes to our riflemen, find they have nothing left for our Volunteer artillerymen.

CHAPTER XXIII.

BECOMING A SOCIETY LION.

WHEN the season commences and "lists of engagements" begin to be filled up weeks, and even months ahead, the annual question must be faced and answered. Who is to be lion-in-chief? "Celebrities" are certainly flourishing at the end of the century. We have our varieties. Now it is a soldier, now an explorer, now a "nigger," now an author, now a "fiddler."

I fancy that lions of a season can be justly divided into two varieties—those who deserve attention on account of their merits and those who claim it on account of their eccentricities. Many years ago a friend of mine was a great collector of human curiosities. "All London" used to be present at his receptions. It was capital fun to see "the menagerie," and the refreshments were by Gunter, or some other eminent artist of the kitchen. One afternoon he met me in great glee.

"You see by your card," said he, "that I have secured the attendance of the Chinese Ambassador?"

I admitted that I was burning with curiosity to see the representative of the Father of the Sun, or the Uncle of the Moon, or whatever other title the ruler of China assumes when *chez lui.*

"Yes, I knew you would like to see him," assented my host, "but I have done better than get him. He is here with his national costume complete, and that's an attraction in itself—isn't it? But what *do* you think? I have induced His Excellency to bring his music with him, and he is just going to sing a comic song!"

And my friend was right. The Ambassador gave us a very charming and amusing song. It was full of humour. Of course I should have appreciated it better had I understood the language. But we all laughed heartily, as if nothing pleased us so well as a really witty saying in pure Pekinian. Later on an accomplished friend of mine obliged with one of his inimitable "piano entertainments." The performance in every way was excellent, and we were all immensely pleased with it, but I am afraid that many of us had a sneaking preference for the Ambassador's *chinoiserie.* The latter was so quaint, and (so far as we were able to judge without understanding the lingo) so thoroughly and entirely original.

On another occasion the same host was delighted at having secured a new kind of explorer.

"He is not one of those fellows who fill up maps for the publishers and get gold medals from the Royal Geographical Society," my friend explained, "but really a first-class hero."

"What has he done?"

"Why, he had the courage—the almost incredible courage—to wish the King of the Cobra Isles good morning!"

"Really. And did the King return the compliment?"

"Return the compliment! Why, it is death to speak to the King! If a man looks at His Majesty his eyes are put out with red-hot irons, and if he touches him he is cast forthwith into the cave of serpents, and dies in terrible agonies."

"Well, how did our sunburnt friend escape?"

"Why, fortunately, the King of the Cobra Isles was a little deaf, and didn't hear him. However, the *Adacanvassa*—a native official corresponding, I believe, to our President of the Board of Trade—did not overlook the occurrence, and ordered our friend to be immediately ground down in a *bakatata kan*, a kind of rudely-constructed sausage machine."

"But as he is here of course he escaped?"

"Yes. The King of the Cobra Isles kindly intervened on his behalf. Negotiations were entered into

with some missionaries in the neighbourhood. Our friend was ransomed at the cost of sixteen ounces of coloured beads, four pounds of gunpowder, and a bottle of rum."

It is many years since this conversation took place, so I cannot speak by the card. However, the above is my impression of the incident, which may be more or less right or more or less wrong.

THE LITERARY LION.

Turning from the past to the present, a man may make himself a lion by attracting attention by some startling eccentricity. It matters very little what the eccentricity is so that it be plain and distinct, and consequently understandable by the people. For instance, say that a candidate for lionship is a *littérateur*. He has to invent a *spécialité*. If people have a general impression that virtue is a matter that should be encouraged rather than not, he should take up vice. This is managed more easily nowadays than it was in the comparatively "long ago." Twenty years since plays that dealt with the seventh commandment found little favour in the eyes of the Reader for the Lord Chamberlain, and novels that sailed dangerously near the wind, lacked subscriptions at the circulating libraries. This last practically meant ruin to the luckless publisher who took

the risk of a "tabooed" book. However, we are more liberal-minded in the hours of the expiring century, and *Formosa* (once held up to horror as the quintessence of the improper), is accepted as quite *bourgeois* in its humdrum respectability, and "Paul Ferrol's Wife" (years ago a novel to be found in the reserved part of Paterfamilias' bookshelves), is suggestive of nothing more formidable than "prunes and prisms." The patronage of Vice either on the stage on in the circulating library is already becoming old-fashioned, but there is still enough life in the mode to help a candidate for lionship to the desired notability. All he has to do is to "go one better" than the latest eccentricity. If Smith has advocated manslaughter, Brown should strongly recommend murder. But not common-place murder, but fratricide or matricide. If Brown can be pointed out as "the chap who wrote that book, don't you know, proving that Faust was right enough in his dealings with Marguerite" his fortune is made. The theory will attract the proper amount of attention. Hitherto it has been accepted that the rejuvenated of Mephistopheles behaved rather badly to Gretchen. Prove that both of them acted in the best possible manner and all will be well. Critics will cry the book up to the skies on the score that it is "intensely human." On my word, I would write the book myself if I were not sure that either the subject has

been done, or that someone at this moment is doing it. Years ago it would have been sufficient to prove that Mephistopheles was not so black as he was painted. But that kind of thing is rather out of date —it ceased to be the fashion after the whitewashing of Henry VIII., Judas, Judge Jeffries, and Pontius Pilate.

It may be safely laid down, as a rule, that if a man can write something that is "bad" enough for the reading of women, it will be good enough for the reading of men.

THE LION ARTISTIC.

If a man is an artist, and he wishes to become a "lion," I fancy that his best course is to go in for "advanced impressionism." I frankly admit that I have never learned drawing, still recent compositions on the hoardings and elsewhere have induced me to believe that I might readily secure fame if I were to adopt "advanced impressionism." Out Whistler Whistler and out Snooks Snooks. Years ago Turner was said to get his effect by slopping a canvas with a paint mop. Nowadays, impressionists of the new school seem to sprinkle whitewash on preparations of Indian ink. After sprinkling they appear to look at their handiwork with a view to selecting the title. If there are three little spots in the centre of the

paper, then the sketch can be called "The Carnival at Venice;" if only a blotch appears in the right-hand corner, it may mean "Dante Meeting Virgil," or "Wellington Greeting Blucher," or "The Lower Thames." In fact, the title doesn't matter in the least—one is as good and as appropriate as another. The last few lines may be accepted as a proof that I have "no soul for art," and consequently am an incapable critic. Such an expression of opinion (if largely circulated) would be most valuable. If I could but establish my right to the title of "the most incapable critic in the world," I should become a lion and get asked out everywhere. As an artist I feel sure I should command instantaneous success. A monthly periodical called *The Yellow Book* recently attracted considerable attention. It was full of weird drawings, that encouraged me to hope that some day I shall be in the first rank of living artists. I dropped some ink on a piece of paper a day or so ago, and the shape the pigment took was not unsuggestive of a spider or a "daddy long legs." Rightly understood, I have not a doubt that my composition accurately depicts "The Goodwin Sands by Moonlight," "St. Peter's on Easter Day," or "Romeo wedding Juliet."

THE LION AND HIS SARTORIAL SURROUNDINGS.

But a candidate for lionship must not rest satisfied with writing a book or painting a picture—he must "dress for the part." If he happens to be of an inventive turn of mind he can do wonders. For instance, why not smoke cigarettes made of vermilion paper? Or why not wear dead flowers instead of living ones for a buttonhole? Or why not (and this suggestion is absolutely beautiful in its simplicity) eat green peas with your knife?

A friend of mine, who was a thoroughly good fellow and a clever man to boot, once thought he might like to get into society. He wrote novels, essays, and poems. They were praised by the critics, but they did not get him talked about in what Thackeray called "the upper suckles." At length his opportunity came. He was called by the Lord Mayor of the period to attend a City banquet. He attended in a velvet coat and a red necktie. This affair got wind, was duly appreciated, and he became at once fully qualified to appear as a lion of the season.

FAME AND ITS VALUE.

Whether the game is quite worth the candle is a question for the lions themselves to decide. As a

rule the fame attained by a season's celebrity does not last longer than a Lord Mayor's tenure of office. The lion gradually sinks, until he finds his level in that modern version of Mrs. Leo Hunter, Mrs. O'Kashenell Parr. He at this period of his butterfly existence is included in a list of "guests," headed by a Lord Somebody and "whipped in" by a rising young actor. Mrs. O'Kashenell Parr is very hospitable, and her cook is a *cordon bleu*. Whether her parties are acceptable or not depends upon the taste of the visitor for cakes and ale, or rather their more expensive equivalents.

CHAPTER XXIV.

ENTERTAINING THE WORKING MAN.

WHEN the Season is commencing in the West-end of town it becomes the fashion to consider the claims of the East. It is the mode to assume that Mr. "'Enery 'Awkins," and his friends, relatives, and acquaintances, are in need of recreation. The object we have in view is "to keep him out of the public-house." No doubt a very excellent idea, but rather suggestive of patronage. I am not quite sure that we would feel greatly complimented were the costers of Shoreditch and Hackney to organise a society to provide the upper classes with amusements suitable to their station. If they suddenly took the Westminster Town Hall, or the rooms belonging to the Institute of Painters in Water Colours, and invited the cultured classes to "happy evenings" or "innocent afternoons," I fancy the said cultured classes would smile contemptuously at the impertinence. The smile would not become more respectful if the Coster Committee

explained that their object was to keep "the Pall Mall club-man out of the smoking-room." I refer to the practice as "slumming" is one of the fads left in London at the end of the century.

THE EARLIEST CLUBS FOR "THE WORKING MAN."

I am not quite sure when "the movement" commenced. Years and years ago a society was organised to establish "working men's clubs." It was assumed by the founders that the artisan, however bright he might be in pursuing his own calling, had yet scarcely sufficient intelligence to look after himself in the hours of non-labour. The builder, the mason, and the bricklayer were consequently invited to spacious buildings opened for their benefit wherein the greatest dissipation consisted of bagatelle and in which the cellar was stocked with no more intoxicating drinks than lemonade, gingerbeer, and soda water. The excellent-intentioned people who issued the invitations to the working men soon found they had made a mistake. The club, with its bagatelle board and temperance drinks had no chance against the tavern with its bright appointments and stimulants. So it soon went to the wall. The movement, I am afraid, did more harm than good, inasmuch as the lesson was learned with a view to future development. When the goody-goody clubs disappeared

others devoted to deep drinking and gambling took their place. I fancy that many of the *cercles* now attracting special attention of the police are the outcome of the scheme for improving the leisure hours of the people. The working man resented the irritating patronage of those who considered themselves his "pastors and masters"; so, instead of playing chess and sipping milk and water he went in for betting and the unlimited consumption of spirits. And I am afraid that he had general sympathy. Charles Dickens in his novels and stories never lost an opportunity of ridiculing the imitation philanthropists. Albert Smith, too, was particularly hard upon the patrons of the poorer classes. In his performances at the Egyptian Hall he delivered many a sly dig at this painstaking community, and ultimately raised a perfect storm of remonstrances by saying that the enthusiasts in China had only one convert—a billiard marker—whose piety was more likely to be the product of cash than any nobler consideration. Both Dickens and Albert Smith were entirely opposed to "gentlefolk patronage," and there was not a single writer who took up the cudgels on the behalf of "the other side."

"QUEEN VICTORIA'S OWN THEATRE."

Perhaps the boldest attempt at entertaining the East-enders was made when a philanthropist converted

the Victoria Theatre (built the Royal Coburg) into a temperance music-hall. The old playhouse has a history. It was erected in the days of George IV., and the name Coburg was a recognition of the connection existing between the Royal Family and the German Duke of that ilk. If I am not wrong in my history, I think it was christened in honour of the Princess Charlotte's marriage with the King of the Belgians. Leaving it to members of the Society of Antiquaries to set me right, I may say that the Coburg was opened with great pomp. The lessee, my maternal grandfather, Mr. Joseph Glossop, was connected with the Court as a gentleman-at-arms. He was Clerk of the Cheque and Exon of that illustrious and valiant body. With this influence behind him he contrived to have the theatre opened by one of the Royal Dukes—I fancy by the Duke of Gloucester. One of the features of the inauguration ceremony was the first appearance of the celebrated "looking-glass curtain." This drop was composed of fairly large mirrors, which unfortunately had been disfigured by the impressions of the dirty hands of the stage carpenters. When it was disclosed to view there was a roar of laughter. For instead of being impressed the audience were much amused to see their own presentments. After the "house" had inspected itself for some minutes, a boy in the gallery called out, "And now show us something prettier."

Of course this suggestion elicited a shout of merriment, and the curtain was voted more of a joke than a marvel. Later on the name of the playhouse was changed from the Coburg to the Victoria, and lost its *cachet.* Some twenty years ago it was the home of that sort of melodrama which is best suited to the tastes of the inhabitants of the New Cut. A little later there was an effort made to revive it as a music-hall on the lines of the Empire, the Alhambra, and the Canterbury. It did not do, and consequently has been converted into a Palace of Philanthropy. The poorer classes, at a nominal rate of admission, are entertained with a very select music-hall programme. At first Shakespearean readings were attempted, but the audience called for something else, and their needs were supplied. I believe the undertaking, thanks to the efforts of a benevolent lady who devotes much of her time to its management, is now doing very well indeed. I have not heard much about it of late, as South of the Thames is not my beat.

"QUITE A LITTLE HOLIDAY" IN LUDGATE CIRCUS.

But perhaps the amateur companies are the latest fashion. The Victoria has, I fancy, a professional staff, and consequently is unlike the voluntary associations in the East End. It was my good fortune a short while since to be present at a concert organised with the view of amusing certain young men co-

operating for their own improvement in the neighbourhood of a well-known city church. The function was held in a highly-decorated room, redolent of illuminated texts, and the company was distinctly select. A clergyman presided, and in the front row were a number of people well known "further west." The programme was a good one. We had some excellent songs sung by two professionals who had kindly volunteered their services, and a host of auxiliary talent. One gentleman did wonders with a banjo. I never heard a more refined rendering of negro minstrelsy in my life. The gentleman uttered his "wheezes" (I believe that is the technical term for those mirth-provoking jokes that find so much favour in the Great St. James's Hall) in a manner that would have been entirely appropriate to the Row or the stalls at the opera.

"You see," he said to me afterwards, "I felt slightly out of it, and could not let them off with much spirit. It is really very difficult to say 'golly, golly' properly unless you are wearing three feet shirt collars and a black face. As I was in my customary evening-dress I am afraid the exclamation sounded a little flat. Don't you think so?"

"Not at all," I returned, "nothing could have been in better taste. The clergyman who presided was delighted, in spite of the fact that he had torn himself away from a confirmation class to listen to you."

Besides the gentleman with a banjo, we heard a reciter who told us gruesome tales (in blank verse) about starved paupers and "the daughters of despair." Further, one talented individual recited a Tommy Atkins' Barrack Ballad in the most faultless fashion. Seeing ladies present, he dropped his voice at words referring to the infernal regions and a condition of the atmosphere that would have excited the suspicion of an inspector of nuisances. But the hero of the evening was unquestionably my friend with the banjo, and when he sang a song with a rattling chorus, and appealed to the audience to join in it, the applause was absolutely deafening. The function was altogether a pleasant one, and we congratulated ourselves all round upon having kept our humble friends the juvenile Christians well employed.

A DISCUSSION WITHOUT MUSIC.

Thanks to the kind invitation of a very old friend of mine, I was present some little while ago at another entertainment organised for the benefit of the poorer classes at the East End. On this occasion we had no songs, but a lecturer who dealt with matters of history from his own standpoint. The address was one of a series, and dealt with subjects not uncalculated to cause heated discussion. The audience was distinctly mixed, and cheers and counter-cheers were

frequently heard during the course of the oration. However, excellent order was maintained, and "fair play" seemed to be the motto of the meeting. At the end of the address questions were submitted to the lecturer, which he proceeded to answer with the most perfect good temper, although some of them might have been couched in politer language. When the speaker had to admit a "palpable hit" the "retort courteous" was received with roars of laughter. When I heard what was to be the subject of the paper I had feared an angry altercation, possibly not confined entirely to words. To my pleased surprise I noticed that although the audience was divided in opinion, there was no sign of violence.

"Remember, my good friends," said one of the gentlemen on the platform, "that we respect the two T's—tolerance and temper. So now that we have done our palavering let us shake hands all round and say good night."

The hint was immediately accepted, and with a hearty cheer for the lecturer the meeting quietly separated.

"ADVANCE THE WORKING MAN."

The result of my peregrinations in the East has convinced me, that thanks to the march of education or from some other equally excellent cause, the work-

ing man at the end of the Century is far more good-natured and far more easily pleased than his predecessors. He does not like to be patronised, and delights in taking part in the proceedings of the evening. On one occasion a not very wise chairman, with a military title, was inclined to be dictatorial.

"Don't you be so arbitrary," shouted one of the audience. "We ain't children, nor yet slaves. We know how to behave, so don't *you* try to ride rough-shod over us."

And this seemed to me the universal sentiment. I do not believe that the modern working man is in the least ungrateful, but he reads the newspapers nowadays, and with their assistance "thinks a thing out." He thoroughly appreciates the efforts of those who show him the way how to enjoy himself in a rational manner, but I fancy that he has already a suspicion that, if needs be, he can get on without the kindly-meant assistance. In the words of the remonstrator who pulled up the dragooning chairman, "he is neither a child nor a slave." Before we are far advanced in the new century I fancy the working man will be seen progressing alone, and if matters do not mend in what Jeames de la Plushe used to call the "Upper Suckles" it is not improbable in the years to come that the East will visit the West, instead of waiting to be visited.

CHAPTER XXV.

CHOOSING A FANCY DRESS.

NOT very long since it was my privilege and pleasure to be present at a modern reproduction of the famed Vauxhall Gardens. The occasion was the first of a series of Fancy Dress Balls at the Royal Opera, Covent Garden. By offering handsome prizes to the conventionally careless throng the management had caused that frivolous company to become exceedingly thoughtful. I have been told that for weeks, and even months, before the ball, those who intend to compete for "the gifts of Druriolanus" had been busy in devising elaborate costumes. On the occasion I noticed a number of excellent assumptions that must have been the outcome of unlimited reflection and not a little imagination. As I watched some most complicated "make-ups" passing by, I frankly admit that I could not understand how their inventors had come to scheme them out. I felt inclined

to observe (repeating a remark that has been frequently addressed to myself when I have had the pleasure of taking a lady down to dinner), I could not "conceive how they came to think of such clever things."

INCONVENIENT COSTUMES.

Of course, those who desire to compete for prizes at Covent Garden will have to expend a good deal of ingenuity, and possibly no little expense, in contriving a dress likely to attract the favourable notice of the powers that be. I have seen before now a gentleman labouring slowly through a giddy throng in the substantial costume of a bust upon a pedestal, and another masker in the garb of a lay figure. The latter was extremely well conceived and carried out. But those who make these attempts after realism should be blessed with the best of good tempers. I frankly confess that I have never appeared as an artist's model myself, and I have no desire to try my luck in such an assumption. I have been credibly informed that he who appears as an animated life-sized doll has to display considerable dexterity in preserving his balance, for a push accidental or the reverse may upset his equilibrium. Such a disastrous pressure is calculated to cause an angry remonstrance from the meekest of men, and savage words emanating from a benevolent mask are likely to

produce more laughter than sympathy. Many years ago, when I was allowed to appear in amateur theatricals, I was permitted to fill the not very important *rôle* of "Zoyland the Blacksmith," in *A Sheep in Wolf's Clothing*. Thinking that my excellent abilities had been unfairly ignored, I introduced a little "comic business" into my part that certainly would have provoked the hostile criticism of the author, my valued friend, the late Tom Taylor. A relative who was "got up" as a dissolute trooper in Percy Kirke's "lambs" offered a remonstrance and told me in irate tones "not to play the fool." These "angry" words, spoken by a gentleman whose face (with the kind assistance of the Clarkson of the period) bore a stereotyped drunken grin, were irresistibly comic, and deeply as I regretted that I should have given him just cause for complaint, I could not help indulging in exuberant merriment. The more he stormed the more I roared, and had we been a few years younger I fear that the interview would have ended with fisticuffs. So I have reasons for counselling those who adopt elaborate or eccentric toilettes to keep their temper. It is almost impossible (under provocation) to preserve a dignified demeanour if you happen to be successfully suggesting a village pump or a humanised lobster. Even Macready made up as "a picnic luncheon" would have been at a disadvantage in the midst of a crowd

of *farceurs* wearing the "modest simplicity" of modern evening dress. At least, such is my opinion after reading the life of the Great Tragedian. But, of course, I offer that opinion for what it is worth.

SIMPLICITY VERSUS ECCENTRICITY.

I have been told that the simplest costume is the best for a private fancy ball. The first dress of Claude Melnotte in *The Lady of Lyons*, is an excellent example of the simple combined with the effective. All you require is a "jumper," a belt, blue trousers, and gaiters worn over your shoes. But simplicity can be carried too far. A friend of mine once went to a costume gathering as the Ghost in *The Corsican Brothers*. All he had to do was to take off his dress-coat and waistcoat and paint a blood-stain on the left side of his shirt over the region of his heart. But the effect was rather repulsive, and before the end of the evening I found the deceased Louis dei Franchi hiding behind curtains, and in other ways attempting to escape observation. On the occasion to which I refer I appeared myself as a Crusader, and I thanked my lucky stars that I had not lived in the time of Peter the Hermit, as I certainly should have shrunk from visiting Palestine in such an embarrassing costume. The weight of chain armour is enormous, and if you do the thing

thoroughly, and allow the chains to cover the soles of your feet, dancing of the most elementary quadrille becomes next to an impossibility. The dress itself was certainly imposing. It had been lent to me by the late Mr. Alfred German Reed, and had been worn by Mr. A. W. Law in a "first part" at the St. George's Hall—the site of the far-famed "entertainment" after the clever "illustrators" had migrated from their first home, "the Gallery of Illustration." The costume was perfect. One of the details was a heavy helmet of the saucepan-minus-handle order of sartorial architecture. This head-covering caused me infinite trouble. If I put it on it tumbled off, and if I laid it on a seat it was sure to be the cause of considerable inconvenience to those who rested without noticing its presence. I remember that it was the means of making "a professional beauty" adopt an expression never seen in any of her numerous *cartes de visite.* Another drawback to the Crusader's armour was the facility with which the wearer dropped his rings. I found that my peregrinations could be easily traced by my steel castings. Under these circumstances I cannot conscientiously recommend the costume of "Richard Cœur de Lion" to anyone who values peace and comfort.

Another awkward dress is the habit of a North-American Indian. When I was a young man I was

pursuaded by a friend to appear as "a chief" in a long leather robe, a complicated headgear of eagle's feathers, and moccasins. To "keep up the character" I was induced to stain my face. I certainly escaped recognition, and had the further advantage of hearing myself called "that melancholy idiot looking like a dying parrot;" but these pleasures were scarcely sufficient to compensate for the nuisance of being universally avoided by dancers as well as wall-flowers. At the time I was editing a London evening paper, and left the ball (it was held at Brighton) by an early train for the metropolis. I had no time to change my costume before meeting my sub-editor, and I shall never forget the look of surprise on the face of the late Mr. Brockwell Dalton when I asked him "to kindly give me the proof of the leaders."

BALS MASQUES IN THE TIME OF ALBERT SMITH.

In the olden days juvenile revellers were rather fond of the costume of Charles II. I refer to the period when moustaches were unknown to the upper lips of anyone outside the commissioned ranks of the cavalry. The representatives of his late Majesty of festive memory had to wear false hair, and I can just remember that such an ornament is distinctly inconvenient. The heat of the ball-room generally

melted the gum, and one had to be constantly re-affixing the hirsute appendage. I am able to declare from experience that it is no easy matter to take supper in a false moustache. It interferes with the soup, disagrees with the *mayonnaise*, and intercepts the champagne. Besides a melancholy Charles II. although, possibly, historically accurate, is a dismal sight in the ball-room. Albert Smith, and (I think) Horace Mayhew, wrote much of the *bals masqués* of their day, and invariably selected as a type of the saddest of the sad, a woe-begone representative of the "merry monarch." So I think I may insist on the assertion, that if a man elects to go to a fancy dress ball as a "gay cavalier," he should at least be naturally cheerful. It is the sort of costume that might have been appropriately worn by Mark Tapley.

"REALISING PICTURES."

It is a little dangerous to talk of ladies' dresses. Powder always looks well, and it may be conceded that the female representatives of the human race usually appear more charming than their lords if not masters. Still there may be drawbacks to the costumes chosen by our woman kind. If Esmeralda accepts the accompaniment of a goat (either real or stuffed) the disadvantage is obvious; and Marguerite, if she insists upon bringing with her the spinning

wheel, will also be (as much as any lady can be) a nuisance. Then it is rather embarrassing when a female friend counts upon "realising" a well-known picture. If she wears a white wig and carries a flower you may safely suggest "The Lost Duchess of Devonshire"—now, by the way, slightly out of date—and a ruff and black velvet are strongly presumptive of a desire to reproduce "Mary Queen of Scots on her way to Execution." But when you have hazarded these fairly safe assumptions there is considerable danger in guessing anything else.

"Who am I?" a lady asked me (in questionable grammar) not very long ago.

I pondered, and noticed that she was wearing flowing flaxen hair, a brown gown, *gants de suède*, and diamonds. I remembered that she had a boy at Eton, and deferentially suggested "Lady Macbeth."

"Oh, no!" she exclaimed. "What an idea! Try again."

Then I looked at her once more, and yet again. She had no ruff, so she would not be "Mary Queen of Scots," and her flowing wavy tresses negatived the presumption that she was the Lost Duchess, so I "gave it up."

"Why, 'Cinderella in the kitchen,'" she replied. "Millais' picture, you know. You would have recognised me at once if you had seen my broom. But I have left it in a corner with my bouquet."

And then I admitted that had I seen the broom I should have had a better chance. And so I should.

EASY, EFFECTIVE, AND NOT EXPENSIVE.

And now I feel that, after all, I have not said very much about the best costume that a man can adopt for a fancy dress ball. All that is required are a few yards of gold lace, a theatrical star, and a fez. Get into your evening dress, and exchange your tail coat for a frock. Next pin or tack a strip of gold lace to the outer seams of your trousers. Turn up your collar, and put more gold lace on the inside, which will now become the outside. Put gold lace round the cuffs and at the back, and (if you like) bind with the same material. Put on your star on the left breast and assume your fez. Having done this, wear a pair of blue spectacles, and you may safely call yourself the late Khedive. If you want to be "quite too good," add a white cotton umbrella lined with green, and the assumption will be "simply perfect."

So I may sum up my advice to those about to go to a fancy dress ball, with the recommendation, when in doubt about the choice of a costume—spoil the Egyptian!

CHAPTER XXVI.

PARLIAMENTARY SPEAKING.

WHEN the House is "up" and the members of the Ministry are more or less "scattered," it might be expected that oratory would take (to use the slang of the day) "a back seat." But this is far from the case. Of late years the representatives of the people have used the recess for airing their eloquence in the presence of their constituents. The practice has found favour in the eyes of the conductors of the press, for almost anything is "good for copy" in the silly season. So "extra parliamentary utterances" have become quite welcome in October, and are sure of a hearty greeting at the hands, or rather the pens, of editors of all shades of political opinion. Under these circumstances it may not be entirely out of place to devote a chapter to the consideration of speech-making, the more especially as no Englishman, while residing in his native country, is safe from receiving an invitation at any time and almost on every occasion "to say

a few words" to those assembled before him. Speech-making is as popular at the end of the century.

EXTRA PARLIAMENTARY UTTERANCES.

I have spoken of parliamentary orators, and although I have never had the honour of sitting officially on the benches of the House during business, still I have had the pleasure and privilege of counting amongst my friends many M.P.'s. These gentlemen are supposed by their constituents to be full of eloquence, and so even if their remarks in Westminster have been confined to an occasional "hear, hear," and an even scarcer cry of "question," they are expected to give a taste of their quality when they get back to the voters they left (during the session) behind them. Nowadays it is not easy to pack a meeting, and even if it were it is not always expedient. There is nothing like making use of the safety-valve, and it is sometimes wiser to let your opponents "have it out with you" in public rather than in private, especially when privacy means a long correspondence in the local press.

"I rather enjoy meeting my constituents face to face," said one of my parliamentary friends the other day. "At any rate I am sure of a respectful hearing for the first quarter of an hour, and that is more than I ever get at St. Stephen's."

Then he told me that he got up his repartees for the occasion. He knew that he would be sure to meet a certain jocular cobbler, who was eqully certain of causing a good deal of interruption.

"I do not dislike the old fellow," continued my friend, "and I fancy that he has a kind of respect for me. But when we meet as 'man to man' (a favourite phrase of his), it is necessary that we should fight as hard as we can. He is sure to put any number of awkward questions, and it will be my task to answer them airily and wittily on the spur of the moment. Here is a list of them. I shall have the answers cut, dried, and polished before the night of the meeting. There is nothing like getting up your *impromptus* well in advance."

My friend was rather anxious, for he had lost one of his greatest supporters, a gentleman habitually described by the chairman as "Mr. Jones from London." This important personage was unable to come to the meeting, and the M.P. said he did not know how he should get on without him.

"You see," said he, "he knows how to get at the hearts of the poorer classes. Really when I have heard him describing the noble fight for existence amongst the lower orders, I have been moved almost to tears. He has convinced me over and over again that it is the duty of those who have cash to share it with those who have it not. If it were not that I

know that he does not live up to his principles, I should be ashamed to meet him. However, as a matter of fact, although a rich man he carefully avoids wasting his cash on charity. But on the platform he is first rate—Wilberforce and Howard rolled into one."

"How does he find time to attend meetings?"

"Oh, he has plenty of leisure. He makes his money by keeping a pawnbroker's shop and renting the squalidest sort of common lodging-houses."

From these admissions I venture to think that political meetings in the provinces (and, if it comes to that, in London too) must not be absolutely earnest and entirely convincing.

SPEAKERS AT THE END OF THE CENTURY.

I suppose everyone has heard at some time or another the most prominent speakers of the day. Mr. Gladstone until the end retained his wonderful silver-toned voice and his earnest manner. The last time I had the opportunity of listening to the great statesman he was apparently heart and soul interested in some question about the wine duties. He had not been expected to speak, but was sitting with his head resting amidst his collars (shirt and coat), with his hands clasping his elbows. He was perfectly motionless, but his eyes were bright and piercing.

"He will be up directly," said a friend beside me,

and my friend was right. All of a sudden Mr. Gladstone sprang to his feet and poured forth a flood of earnest eloquence about something or other connected with bottles. At this date I have not the faintest idea what it was all about, but I know that at the time I was deeply moved, and had I had to vote should have certainly followed the right hon. gentleman into his favourite lobby. I was completely carried away by his evident earnestness—for the moment I honestly believed that the fate of my country, nay, the fate of the universe, depended upon something or other connected with bottles!

The last time I heard Lord Beaconsfield speak was at Willis's Rooms in the days of the old building. We had been called together to consider the advisability of erecting a statue to Lord Byron, and the platform was occupied by several eminent ecclesiastics. There were, to the best of my recollection, an archbishop and two or three bishops, and plenty of deans, archdeacons, and such small clerical deer. Lord Beaconsfield was received with enthusiasm. He made a capital speech. I could not help contrasting his style—his calm measured sentences—with the dash and go of his great parliamentary rival. As earnestness was the essence of Mr. Gladstone's oratory, so was polished epigram the "stock" of Disraeli's carefully considered utterances. The great Conservative was delightfully calm. He was always

dignified, and even when flippant distinctly majestic. I remember that on the occasion to which I refer he made a point which convulsed the audience the moment it was understood.

"I do not pretend to defend all the faults of the poet's private character. It is unfortunately common knowledge that he was a libertine. But then, my Lords and gentlemen," said Dizzy, turning to the archbishop, bishops, and the remainder of the clerics, "*we have all been young!*"

The speaker spoke perfectly gravely. For a moment there was a silence, and then when the audience took the point, came a shout of applause and a roar of laughter. The idea of suggesting the possibility that so eminently a respectful company might have found themselves in the same boat with the peccadilloes of Lord Byron was too lovely for words!

ARCHBISHOP MAGEE AND OTHERS.

Amongst other orators of the past I call to mind Archbishop Magee, who was, I suppose, at the time of his lamented death, one of the finest (if not the finest) speakers that the House of Lords could boast. The last time I heard the prelate address an audience was at a charity dinner in connection with the Artists' Benevolent Fund. His address was a model one. Nothing could have been better than the

contrast of light and shade. Now he was causing roars of laughter, now bringing unbidden tears to eyes generally free from such a sign of womanly weakness. He took advantage of his nationality to refer to the well known love of the Irish people for peace, and their equally marked aversion to anything connected with "a row." He said that he was a lover of harmony, not only as an ecclesiastic, but as a native of the Emerald Isle. Then he described a beautiful picture that he had seen during the season hanging to the walls of Burlington House. It was a sketch of the calm and silvery Thames. The sun was setting, and the atmosphere spoke eloquently of rest and solitude.

"When I gazed upon this lovely painting," said his Grace, or rather his Lordship, for he then was only Bishop of Peterborough, "I felt that even curates might play with me with impunity!"

Then another admirable speaker was the late Charles Dickens, whose orations have since his death been gathered together in a single volume, which is quite worthy of taking its place on the shelf reserved for his novels. Thackeray never cared for oratory, and preferred to write rather than to talk—at a public meeting. As a conversationalist he was admirable, and was *the* feature of the Garrick Club when that brilliant crowd of clever men foregathered in the old quarters at King Street, Covent Garden. Sir Edward

Bulwer Lytton, afterwards Lord Lytton, and the father of the late "Owen Meredith," "read better than he wrote." His delivery was extremely artificial, and he found considerable difficulty in modulating his voice, no doubt because he suffered from the infirmity of deafness. I remember seeing him at the old Portland Club, in the days when that *cercle* was situated at the corner of Stafford Place, Oxford Street. As a rule whist was negotiated in silence, but on the occasion to which I refer there had been such extremely bad play on the part of one of the quartette, that at the end of the rubber there was considerable "reclamation." Hot words were spoken that a hundred years earlier might have led to a matutinal visit to Chalk Farm. But Lord Lytton heeded them not. He sat like a statue, unmindful of their utterance. Both Lyndhurst and Brougham learned their speeches by heart before they delivered them, and Lord John Russell was the last of the statesmen who used the old pronunciation for "oblige," invariably calling the word "oblege."

SOME PERSONAGES IN THE LOWER HOUSE.

Thanks to scores of reporters, we know the characteristics of all the speeches of most of our modern statesmen. The "Devonshire yawn" has taken the place of the "Hartington slumber," marking the elevation of the popular statesman from the Commons

to the Peers. Mr. Goschen, when he has no notes, and can speak without a paper held close to his *pince nez*, is also a favourable specimen of the talent of the House of Commons. Mr. Arthur Balfour has just a touch of the Hartington-Devonshire weariness. He is very much on the alert when seated in his place, but the moment he rises to address the House he seems just a trifle lackadaisical. This was particularly noticeable when he was engaged a few years ago in answering the questions of the Irish members. Mr. Chamberlain has a "smooth" manner, but his smoothness is not unsuggestive of the calm of oil of vitriol. Mr. Labouchere smiles sweetly when he says the absurdest things; and Colonel Saunderson beams with good nature when he delivers his most pointed sallies. Nowadays we have no wags. For some time Sir Wilfrid Lawson was accepted as a wit, but I am afraid of late his humour has been considered as much out of date as the good things of the late Mr. Joseph Miller. Dr. Wallace before his lamented death was coming to the front as a humorist. His claim to be considered one of the House's "funny men" was neither allowed nor disallowed.

THE PARLIAMENTARY MANNER.

I have been told, for I cannot speak from experience as I have never had the honour of sitting in the House myself, that "the parliamentary manner"

is everything. Young fellows who have come fresh from the "U.D.C.'s" of Oxford and Cambridge, unless they can catch the mode are nowhere. Many a man who has made a reputation even in oratory outside the House has lost it the moment he has passed the portals guarded by the Serjeant-at-Arms. And a first impression is very important. A man very frequently does more in his initial couple of sessions than in his whole parliamentary career. If he fails he falls like Lucifer never to rise again. An "old Parliamentary hand" once told me that a first oration should be short and good, so that the rest of the House might ask for more. The "member of the maiden speech" should know his subject well and have something to say worthy of attention. If possible, it should be new and certainly true. The day may come when the good young man may enhance his reputation by laying himself open to correction, and then pave the way to that most popular of performances, "a personal explanation." And at first he should be as reliable as *Truth* (*the* person *and* the periodical) themselves—he cannot indulge in imagination until he is at least five sessions old.

THE HOUSE IN THE THEATRE.

When I commenced this chapter, I had every intention of dealing with the art of public speaking generally—parliamentary, municipal, and social—but

I find that I have already exhausted my patience in touching upon the first branch of the subject. However, that I may get away from the Theatre Royal, Westminster, to the Theatre Royal, Haymarket, and (old) Prince of Wales's I refer to two pieces that contained speeches supposed to be delivered by candidates for parliamentary honours. The first was a play at "the little house," in which Mr. Charles Mathews took part. He acted as an agent, and Buckstone was in the cast. The old Haymarket company supplied the remainder of the *dramatis personæ*. I fancy that Buckstone was the fugleman of a band of voters whose opinions were emphasised with bludgeons. They were called "lambs," and existed long before the days of the Nottingham scandals. If my memory does not play me false, the piece was called *The Contested Election*. Then there was a piece by Mark Lemon called, strangely enough, *The Member for Wrottenborough*, and of course Tom Robertson's *Society*. In the last I first saw Sir Squire Bancroft, who played Sydney Daryll long before his charming wife had changed her name from Wilton to Bancroft. No one noticed the Squire's "drawl" in those distant days, but then the popular actor had yet to play Captain Hawtree in *Caste*. I remember the effect of the speech at the end of *Society* spoken "off." Bancroft's voice was accepted as pathetic, without a trace of the "swelldom" that was

its chief characteristic when he appeared as the extra-heavy dragoon, and the oration "went" with thunders of applause. Time has thinned the old cast. "Johnnie" Clarke and Dewar have joined the majority, but we still have the Bancrofts and Hare. *Society* must have been produced some thirty years ago, and *The Contested Election* (written if I am not wrong by Tom Taylor) a decade or two earlier. Of the cast of the last I fancy none remain—the last to go were Mrs. Charles Mathews and Mr. Henry Howe.

CHAPTER XXVII.

ART IN LONDON.

TWO Sundays in April a large number of people (they are called "smart" in the Society journals) spend their time in visiting Chelsea and St. John's Wood in search of the pearls of the studios. A great many of them possibly know as little about art as anything else, and the vast majority probably make the customary rounds because it is the thing to do. A select few, no doubt, are actuated by nobler motives. These genuine lovers of pictures put in an appearance to see their favourites' work before the canvases are annexed by Burlington House and the New Gallery. After all, the best place of inspection for a painting is the studio. When it is resting on its easel all its beauties can be fully recognised, especially should its author be in attendance. It is placed in the best light, and incongruous neighbours are warned off. No doubt the

Hanging Committee of the Royal Academy and the Managing Directors of the New Gallery do their best to secure appropriate surroundings to all the works entrusted to their care; still accidents will happen. If one painting is killed by another, and a third is rendered ridiculous by the presence of a fourth, the excuse must be that space is limited, and bad hanging (from an artist's point of view) is better than no hanging at all. So given that the best place in which to see a picture is its native studio, and an excuse is found for the crowds who congregate in Chelsea and the Regent Park during the April Sundays.

THE DIGNITY OF ART.

As I write there is no more enviable position in the wide world than the Presidentship of the Royal Academy. A season or two ago I happened to be present at the meeting of two Royal Academicians in the rooms at St. James's Palace. They were both in Court dress, and both had paid their respects to the Representative of their Sovereign. They looked and were cultured and comely gentlemen. Amidst the glittering throng of scarlet and blue uniforms the two members of the Royal Academy more than held their own. They were *excessivement distingué*. And I could not help contrasting with these

admirable representatives of modern English art the sort of worker that found his pictorial embodiment in Keene's sketch of "Stodge." The painter of twenty or thirty years ago was a Bohemian *pur et simple.* He had hosts of friends, and these friends chaffed him unmercifully if he showed the slightest inclination to go "into the world." If a man appeared after dark in a studio in evening dress, he was held up to ridicule as "a swell;" if he accepted an invitation to stay a week or so at a country house he was regarded with real concern as a dangerous madman. Charles Keene's "Stodge" was the companion sketch to Tom Robertson's "Stylus." The latter was the "literary hack" of Bohemia. They both were thoroughly good fellows —in the best sense of the word gentlemen—but I am afraid, from a society point of view, just a little "impossible." Nowadays "Stodge" is all that he should be, and "Stylus" is nothing that he shouldn't be. They are welcome in halls of dazzling delight in Belgravia and Mayfair, and are asked to meet all sorts of august personages. Very right and proper. A king picked up an artist's pencil, and for centuries our principal portrait painters have received the honour of knighthood.

The old affectation (for it was nothing more) of preferring clay pipes and beer to cigars and wine, has passed away. Long hair is nowadays scarcely a

sign of genius, and a tail coat does not bar the road to distinction. In a word, artists and journalists have rejoined the company that ages ago included Sheridan and Reynolds, Goldsmith and Dr. Johnson.

ART AND COMMERCE.

Leaving social questions out of consideration, and merely regarding Art as a profession, there is no doubt that when successfully followed it is most lucrative. When certain wills come to be proved I fancy that it will be discovered that painters make quite as much money as popular physicians and celebrated solicitors. The pick of the work (from a commercial point of view) is portrait painting. I have been told that every Royal Academician can secure as much as he pleases of this kind of work if he likes to accept it. Of course, men of the standing of Mr. Sargent, Mr. Luke Fildes, and Professor Herkomer must be pestered with people wishing to give them commissions. That goes without saying; but I fancy all the Brethren of Burlington House could turn portrait painters if they pleased. I believe that there a number of "subjects" who give commissions on the understanding that their portraits must be exhibited either at the Royal Academy or in the New Gallery. This body (a large one) would serve as a *clientèle*. However, be it said in honour

of art that the R.As. are reticent in painting portraits. Those who practise or have practised this branch of their profession have invariably been worthy of their tasks. Some of the best pictures of the century have been portraits painted by Millais, Fildes, Ouless, Herkomer, and Frith. After portraits, perhaps Scriptural subjects are the most lucrative. A painting that can be shown in a separate room, and then engraved, is "a little fortune" to anyone who can acquire it. "Pot-boilers" of pretty children, military exploits, and "made-up" reproductions of popular resorts are not to be despised. They all bring grist to the mill, and in considerable quantities. The printsellers are great allies of the artists, and so are the advertisers. Soap-sellers have immortalised "Cherry Ripe" and the cigarette makers have caused many a clever sketch by a worker in black and white to be continually perpetuated on the metropolitan hoardings.

PAST AND PRESENT.

To sum up. The profession of an artist in London, instead of being considered as the "occupation" of an idle dreamer, is now regarded as an excellent opening for a young man who can boast talent as well as birth and breeding. A successful artist must be a well-read and polished

gentleman. Of course, like Tennyson, he may shun society, but when face to face with his fellows he must be able to hold his own. Of course I do not say that genius may not raise an artist from the ranks as it raises men in every other walk of life from the same source. The stories of the Chancellors have told us that many a keeper of a sovereign's conscience has had forbears of the humblest origin. But such exceptions have proved the rule that in intellectual callings early associations with refinement are of the last importance. Nowadays family portraits intended to continue the series of centuries are painted by the artistic scions of the race depicted, and even millionaires find no fault with the occupation regarded from the standpoint of L. s. d. So given talent, there can be no pleasanter career for a man than that which makes a studio not only a place of recreation but a source of income.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

SPENDING BANK HOLIDAY IN LONDON.

ON the first Monday in August all Londoners enjoy, officially, the last summer outing for the year. If the weather be fine, thousands and thousands go rushing into the country on pleasure bent. The rail and the boat carry them miles and miles away. Before the day is over an immense number of our fellow countrymen are able to boast that they have been to France and back. A glance at the advertisement columns of the weekly papers on or about this time will show how many and varied are the distractions of "long distances in limited times." North and south, east and west, people can go to see their friends or to renew acquaintance with that universal benefactress, Dame Nature, in her country residence. My accomplished friend, Mr. Ashby Sterry, has shown us in his "Tiny Travels" how many delightful excursions may be made near poor old London.

Town to most Englishmen (and in the term I include Scots, Irish, and Welsh) is at all times a charming spot. I use the adjective advisedly. There is something absolutely "charming" about the accessories of London. A native is accustomed to the magic of the two great cities, and expresses no surprise. But the country cousin (who frequently knows his London infinitely better than his metropolitan relative) finds genuine subjects for wonderment in such places as the Tower, the Crystal Palace, the National Gallery, the group of Government exhibitions in South Kensington, and the British Museum. So, in spite of the rival attractions of the provinces, I contend that our little village has many claims upon our attention. London is not half a bad place to recreate in, but (to quote a song already old) "You have to know it first." Even on a Bank Holiday life can be lived profitably in town.

BILLINGSGATE IN THE EARLY MORNING.

I need scarcely say that it is a very excellent thing, if you can manage it, to rise early. The late George Augustus Sala has, I think, shown us, in "Twice Round the Clock," that the initial hours of the day may be spent to great advantage in either Billingsgate or Covent Garden Market. It is some years since I visited the first place at the time to

which I have referred, but my recollections of the occasion are distinctly vivid. I was going by the early morning boat to Boulogne, and at that time there was a regulation in force that passengers were only permitted to come on board an hour before the departure of the vessel. In these circumstances, I found myself a person with little to do, plus ample time in which to do it; or, as our American cousins might have termed me, a temporary member of the "leisure classes." After leaving St. Katharine's Dock at about two in the morning I walked by the Tower Ditch, where I found a man engaged in a fight with a lady who described herself (in language more suitable, perhaps, to Billingsgate than Pall Mall) as his wife. As the female was getting the worst of it I thought it my duty to interfere, when the couple, recognising the unity imposed upon them by the law, made up their difference immediately and "went for me." I had to run, if not for my life, at any rate for my personal safety. I was younger then than I am now, and therefore could trust to my agility. I was taught the lesson, however, to avoid interference in domestic squabbles. It is dangerous to intervene between man and wife—especially in the neighbourhood of the Tower before sunrise. My rapid retreat took me to Billingsgate Market, brilliantly lighted with gas, and full to overflowing with fish salesmen and fish purchasers. The auctioneers are hard at

work knocking down the inhabitants of the vasty deep with the celerity of lightning. Outside the market for two or three hundred yards the streets were congested with carts. Some years after the date I have in my mind as I write, there was a correspondence in the newspapers calling attention to the crush, and declaring that some of the vehicles crowded with fish never reached their destination. A number of the correspondents insisted upon the cruel waste caused by the confusion and interruption of the traffic, and there were leaders of the usual type suggesting that London was sacrificed to mismanagement and greed of gain. It was during the "dead season" that these interesting communications appeared, and for the moment everyone left in town talked of nothing else. Then someone committed a mysterious murder, or one of our agents in savage lands got up a little war, or a bank came to grief, or something of that sort happened, and Billingsgate and its abuses were forgotten. I have no doubt that were enquiry made it would be found that Billingsgate stands where it stood and the abuses are just as much a matter of the present as they were of the past. No doubt we pay now just as much (and unjustly too much) as we did then. A holiday-maker tied to town on the next *fête* of St. Lubbock might pay the place an early morning visit and see how things are going. Always supposing that the feast does

not interfere with business, I imagine he would find plenty of material for an indignant letter to the papers. Let me recommend the experiment.

A LITTLE DINNER AT THE SHERIDAN CLUB.

The early riser can get some amusement out of Covent Garden Market shortly after sunrise, as a rule. But this rule, again, may have its exception—on a Bank Holiday. Not very long ago I was dining at a club in the neighbourhood noted for the sociable qualities of its members. The dinner was held in the strangers' coffee-room, which, after a certain hour, becomes the supper-room. I had a most delightful time of it until 1.30 o'clock, enjoying thoroughly the pleasant conversation of the diners. At that hour the supper-eaters began to appear, and at 2 o'clock we were earnestly discussing the latest play. At 3 o'clock there were fresh arrivals, when one of the number began to explain how a gentleman at the Royal Westminster Aquarium contrived to jump into a shallow tank from above (and through) the roof of that popular institution without killing himself.

"If I had to do it," said a portly gentleman, whose diving days I should have imagined were (if I may use the expression) more than over, "I should arrange under the water a combination of springs."

"Springs of water?" asked a wag. "Do you mean springs of water?"

"No, sir," replied the portly gentleman. "I do not mean springs of water, I mean mechanical springs. It seems to me simple enough."

As no one appeared to wish to discuss the matter further, it was allowed to drop. Then we talked of the latest Pinero play until 4 a.m. The conversation was delightful; still, as the hour of breakfast approached, I confess I began to think about retiring to rest. But it is a little difficult to break up a pleasant *coterie*, even at daybreak. It seems so selfish and unsociable.

"And now how about the Transvaal?" asked one of our party, as the hands of the clock pointed to 5 a.m.

"You must permit me to say," I interposed, "that I object to politics."

I rose to go, and my example was followed by the rest of the company. By this means I was able to see Covent Garden Market in the early hours of the morning. Of course, if you please, you can retire to your couch at 10 o'clock overnight, and can be called by the sweep when he comes to clean the kitchen chimney. But perhaps a little dinner at the Sheridan Club is better.

And when you have seen the great show of flowers and vegetables I am not sure that you will be much

the happier or much the wiser. You will come to the conclusion that Billingsgate "by any other name would smell as sweet"—even if it were called Covent Garden, and that there were worse nicknames in the world than "Mud Salad Market."

A DRIVE IN A DESERTED CITY.

Suppose, then, that you by some means or other are up early. Now comes the question how to spend the day. If it is fine, why not patronise the top of an omnibus, and from any point of the compass patronise the City? The streets of London east of the Griffin at Temple Bar on a Sunday or Bank Holiday are a sight to see. You can quite understand why the merchants, bankers, and stockbrokers who have offices within sound of Bow Bells insist upon a special week-day house-to-house visitation on the occasion of a census. When business is over the City of London is practically a city of the dead. You pass through the wide thoroughfares and do not meet a living soul. The place might be plague-stricken, it has such a deserted appearance. But "in revenge" (as the French say), you see all the beauties of the spot. Now that road and pavement are not overcrowded with hurrying clerks and crawling vehicles, you have the chance of inspecting the magnificent new buildings that during the last few years have sprung

up on every side with all their glorious luxuriance of detail. If your taste lie in the direction, you can enter the City churches. You will find any number of interesting inscriptions pointing at a score of eventful lives lived in the later centuries. Here and there you will come across an ancient tomb, but not many, for the Great Fire made a general clearance of the memorials of our ancestors. And if you want to refresh your memory about City benefactions, go to the Guildhall Library and Museum. If you desire to be awed, enter St. Bartholomew's and St. Paul's. If you have the least intelligence, you will then find that you have had a delightful morning—always supposing it has been fine.

A PAUSE FOR REFRESHMENT.

By the time you have left the City and returned westward you will learn that you are ready for lunch. Do not go to your club, but try a restaurant. Without laying myself open to giving a gratuitous advertisement, it may be permissible to hint that there are two or three establishments in Regent Street where you can get an excellent meal at a very reasonable rate—not the regulation English food, cooked in the customary brutal British fashion, but a dainty meal worthy of the Olympian gods—a *Chateaubriand* or a *filet*, a *sole Normande*, or a *turbot au gratin* with a

dish of *petits pois au beurre*, and an *artichaut à l'huile*. In the Strand, too, there are a number of excellent restaurants; but the best of the establishments, take them all in all, are situated in the Quadrant in Regent Street. Many's the time have I lunched there, and, in the days of long ago, dined in its upper chambers, in the company of gallant yeomen, brave aquatic athletes and equally pleasing companions. Much good music, too, have I heard within its welcome walls. I may not mention its name, but those who know it will corroborate me in the estimates I have formed of its value. May it flourish!

SEEING THE (USUALLY) UNSEEN.

Lunch over, and be ready for a visit to little known exhibitions and museums. I give a list, and would like to bet that not a tenth of my readers have been to one of them, and not a hundredth to all of them.

DIPLOMA GALLERY, BURLINGTON HOUSE.—Next door to the Royal Academy. Open daily all the year round. Immensely amusing. All the pictures painted as gifts to the Academy by recently-elected Academicians and Associates. Some of them will make you roar with laughter. Pictures by several living artists intensely funny. In the near neighbourhood the Gibson collection. A few good Reynoldses and other British old masters. Altogether the visit will furnish

"instruction combined with amusement," to quote the phrase associated with the lectures delivered at the poor old Polytechnic.

SIR JOHN SOANE'S MUSEUM, 13, Lincoln's Inn Fields.—Any number of original Hogarths, worth untold gold, and some splendid old Masters. Lots of curious odds and ends, inclusive of designs for the National Gallery, with its salt dredger cupola and its pepper-box towers. Gaining admission will be rather funny. The public are not allowed to enter on any Monday, but you can get cards of admission for that day at the museum from the curator. So, "happy thought," wake up the curator!

PARKES' MUSEUM OF THE SANITARY INSTITUTE, 74a, Margaret Street, W.—I daresay a most excellent collection. I have not the faintest idea what it is like.

ROYAL ARCHITECTURAL MUSEUM, 18, Tufton Street, Dean's Yard, Westminster.—Again I daresay vastly interesting. Never heard of the place until I found it in *Whitaker*, which is rather reticent about its attractions. After giving the name and address, it adds, with significant brevity, "Curator, Francis Ford." The excellent almanack says nothing about the terms of admission, or gives any further information, so intending Bank Holiday visitors had better look up

the curator. No doubt that presumably excellent gentleman will be delighted to see them. If after this suggestion a discovery is made of what on earth is to be seen in the Royal Architectural Museum in 18, Tufton Street, S.W., this chapter will not have been written in vain.

When these "monuments" have been done thoroughly the August reveller might—if he can find the time—look in at the Royal United Service Institution in Whitehall, the Museum of Practical Geology in Jermyn Street, and the Museum of the College of Surgeons in Lincoln's Inn Fields. All very good amusement for people who care for plans of battles, models of coal, skeletons, and similar objects of interest.

A LITTLE DINNER, AN HOUR'S RECREATION, AND SO TO BED.

By this time lunch will have been forgotten, and it will be approaching the hour of dinner. Again discard your club and trust to auxiliary aid. You can get an excellent meal at the Hôtel Métropole at a reasonable rate; so you can at the Grand, or the Victoria. You can dine comfortably at the Cecil or the Bristol, and there are millions of worse things than a dinner at the Holborn Restaurant, or at Frascati's, in Oxford Street. If you like Italian dishes, go to

Privatelli's and Romano's, and if you love fish, visit Rule's, in Maiden Lane. If you are fond of a quiet little dinner, try the establishment in Great Portland Street that Signor Pellegrini (of *Vanity Fair*) knew so well. Or you might look in at Vevey's. There is also such a hostelrie as the Continental, and the Carlton, Long's, and the Hummums have all capital *tables d'hôte.* When one comes to think of it, there are so many good feeding places in London that the question is what to give up and what to retain—not where to dine, but where not to dine. And having had dinner and spent an hour at the Palace Theatre afterwards the Londoner tied to town during the Bank Holiday may contentedly go to bed.

CHAPTER XXIX.

A BANK HOLIDAY WITHOUT "'ARRY."

WHEN one of the statutory Bank Holidays of the year comes round, all the *employés* of the "money garneries" take full advantage of their legalised leisure. But not only these gentlemen are at liberty, but the thousands, and I may almost say millions of people whose occupation goes with the compulsory closing of the pass-books. All the shops have their shutters up, and were it not that all the churches remain closed, while all the public-houses are open, it would be difficult to distinguish Monday from Sunday. Sir John Lubbock when he obtained his beatification by acclamation, no doubt little anticipated the wide extension of his plan of recreation. It would be interesting to learn whether the philanthropic baronet expected the closing of the banks to be followed by the suspension of business on the part of the butcher, the baker, and the candlestick

maker. No doubt, when his Bill became an Act, Sir John had in his mind's eye the relief of that highly respectable individual, the "paying-in-clerk." It would be difficult to imagine a more staid person than this calm official. Until lately there was a law in one of the great banking establishments that no *employé* of the firm should be permitted to wear moustaches, and it is not easy to imagine a bank clerk of any standing wearing knickerbockers and a pot-hat. No doubt Sir John imagined that the released toilers of the four statutory holidays would be of the highly respectable type I have suggested. As a matter of fact—as all the world knows—the Bank Holiday has been given over in great part to that most objectionable individual, the ubiquitous and unextinguishable "'Arry." And the presence of this person renders the enjoyment of a Bank Holiday almost impossible to ordinary Londoners. And this being so, it may not be out of place to consider the means of making the most of the festival *minus* 'Arry.

THE SURVIVAL OF THE SNOB.

And now before considering how a holiday may be enjoyed without the company of the ubiquitous one, it may be as well to examine 'Arry as he lives at the end of the nineteenth century. He is not altogether a modern creature, in spite of the portrait

that has been painted of him by *Mr. Punch.* "The Sage of Fleet Street" (to give the licensed jester of the Press one of his favourite titles) has drawn him as a slangy, pretentious fellow, well up in the politics of the day, and, in fact, a person of considerable general information. It is interesting to note that 'Arry is the survival of the snob that Albert Smith imagined in the pages of *The London Charivari* long before Thackeray had seized upon the term and completely altered its significance. The snob of the early forties was a quieter specimen of the genus cad than his descendant 'Arry. He was given to wearing "loud" costumes, but was dignified rather than noisy. His one idea was to copy his betters, and as the swell of the period was celebrated for his gravity, the snob was sedate, not to say solemn. In the hands of the explorer of Mont Blanc the little Cockney became quite a creation. He was, so to speak, too large for *Punch,* and expanded into the pages of a supplementary publication. If I am not mistaken, the snob was the subject of one of those sixpenny books that Albert Smith brought out shortly after seceding from the company of 85, Fleet Street, or rather Wellington Street, Strand. Perhaps my friend Mr. Ashby Sterry, who is a great authority upon these remarkable little works, will say his say upon the subject. Did the author of "The Adventures of Mr. Ledbury" ever write of "the snob?" That is the question I

put to the erudite author of "The Bystander." Whether he did or not does not alter the fact that the snob of the forties was the 'Arry of the nineties —with a difference. That difference may be aptly termed a time allowance. Things change and with them 'Arrys.

HOW TO AVOID THE PEST.

It would be a mistake to regard all Bank Holiday makers as specimens of *Mr. Punch's* well-known type. As a rule the "h" less stumpy lad of the Fleet Street creation is not to be found in excursions where the British artisan is much in evidence. He is not particularly fond of the railway, and unless a local is seldom seen at the sea-side. He appears to thrive in the London air, and is never so happy as when treading his native pavements. Occasionally he takes a trip on board some river steamboat to Margate, and more recently Boulogne-sur-Mer; but for choice he patronises "'Ampstead 'Eath" or "'Appy 'Ampton." He is never so much at ease as when he is shouting or singing "Down 'Endon Way," or doing the forest glades of Easterly Chingford. He may be found at the music halls and the *al fresco* exhibitions. He does not care much for the drama, and even at "the temples of varieties" prefers the blandishments of the young lady at the bar to the vocal charms of the most fascinating of "serio-

comiques." Of one thing Bank Holiday travellers may be tolerably certain. That nowadays the many excellent excursions organised by the various railway companies will be free from the intrusion of this personal pest. 'Arry has no friends nor relatives out of London. He is not troubled to go to the north, south, east, or west in search of kith and kin. So those who intend to travel to their country places need have no fear of molestation from "the loud brigade." The excursionists of to-day may in some instances be sufficiently homely folk, but they will be kindly and obliging, and in every sense the antithesis of 'Arry. So all the Bank Holiday maker has to do is to avoid the suburbs. To be extra particular, places whose names are initialled with an aspirate should be barred. As a matter of fact, towns commencing with an "H" have a fascination for 'Arry. Although not loving the sea, he is still occasionally found at "'Astings" and "'Erne Bay."

'ARRY AND THE THEATRE.

Strange to say, so far, "'Arry" has avoided the stage, or rather, has proved unattractive to the dramatists. On a first night he is occasionally found in the front rows of the pit, and joins heartily in the guffaws which follow a successful attempt to "guy" some novel production. I do not think he has the

wit to invent those satirical remarks that now and again serve as an accompaniment to the dialogue of a play "going badly," but he can always take part in the merriment with which those comical conceits are greeted. But, as a character on the boards, he is distinctly a novelty. Mr. Weedon Grossmith gave a very amusing sketch of a Jewish 'Arry in one of Mr. Pinero's clever farces, and Mr. Penley has also approached within measurable distance of the great original in another play. But 'Arry *pur et simple* (or rather neither) has yet to be introduced to the patrons of the playhouse. We have had something very like 'Arriet in various types of female unloveliness, but 'Arry has yet to be painted. It is a pity that Ibsen knows so little of England. Many of the characters in his extraordinary plays are not altogether unsuggestive of the typical Cockney cad. Of course, the Master Builder is altogether a superior person, and yet in his selfishness and conceit, his treatment of his wife, his type-writer, and apprentice there is some resemblance in his character to the London pest. Not that 'Arry would have ascended a steeple with a view to waving a flag. 'Arry, to put it in his own favourite "lingo," would have "known a trick worth two of that." Besides, Ibsen's Master Builder was a man almost past the prime of life. No doubt he was more accustomed to slippers, dressing-gowns, and spectacles than steeple-climbing. The

Master Builder was a rather melancholy gentleman of about fifty-five or sixty. 'Arry never grows a day older than twenty-five or thirty. When he marries—which he does fairly early—he ceases to be himself, and becomes unobjectionable. Whether he marries 'Arriet I know not, but if he does, both he and she cease to be nuisances and "tone down" into something quite presentable. So 'Arryism may be regarded as the attribute of youth if not of beauty.

A CLUB FOR 'ARRY.

Still, 'Arry does exist, and is unfortunately *en évidence* on a Bank Holiday. He is particularly fond of the river, and, if the weather be fairly good, will be found in hundreds and thousands on the Thames. He is rather amusing—from a distance. At Kingston there is a charming club on the banks of the Thames, with pleasant grounds and a well-appointed house. Before now I have, on a Bank Holiday, journeyed down to this favourite spot, and from the terrace have watched 'Arry at my leisure. I have been amused at his high spirits as displayed in "larks" on a boat, and have even appreciated his indistinctly heard harmony. 'Arry is better far away; in his case distance certainly lends enchantment to the view. The club to which I refer is within half-an-hour of town. You can train it or cab

it or coach it. Arrived at your happy retreat, you can lunch for a florin or dine at three-and-sixpence. The wine is good and cheap, and altogether the place is worthy of patronage. On Bank Holidays it is simply delightful. There are very few members present, so that you can easily escape "the madding crowd." And here I may express my surprise that so far 'Arry has been clubless. Why does he not start a joint-stock palace on the lines set down in Piccadilly? It would be a good thing, for 'Arry, once subject to committee rules, would readily abandon his most objectionable attributes. Just now new clubs are rather at a discount, otherwise my suggestion might be valuable. It will be necessary to find a good name for the *cercle*. How about "The Imperial"? 'Arry is nothing if not patriotic.

A SUBSTITUTE FOR A DAY WITH 'ARRY.

In considering the Cockney as a class I have almost forgotten to suggest a mode of avoiding him as an individual. I have hinted that clubland is forbidden ground (at present) to the successor of Smith's snob. But there are other places that are equally sacred. 'Arry avoids a *cercle* because he is refused admittance; he does not appear at any of the museums because he has no inclination. The young man is nothing if not light-hearted. He likes

the open air, where there is plenty of room for his pipe, his stick, and his laugh. So if you want to avoid him on a Bank Holiday you cannot do better than visit the South Kensington Museum, or the National Gallery, or St. Paul's, or Westminster Abbey. Now that 'Arry can no longer inscribe his initials on the tombs of kings, or the funeral cars of emperors, he cares not for cathedrals. Now that he is expected to be silent in a public library, he no longer haunts the great reading-room of Bloomsbury. It is quite safe to go to any place of instruction open gratuitously to the public. The young man will not be found at the Diploma Gallery, nor the School of Mines in Jermyn Street, nor even at the Sir Hans Sloane's Museum in Lincoln's Inn Fields, so the general public may go to those haunts of the learned in their thousands. If they do, they will no doubt rather surprise the custodians, inured, as they must be, to solitude in its simplest form; but that is a matter of detail. As for the typical Cockney, he can go where he will, and no doubt will take full advantage of the privilege. A day devoted to the Diploma Gallery is not suggestive of the wildest delight, but it is better than 'Ampstead and 'Arry. At least, such is the opinion of those who have tried both, and have no desire to retry either.

CHAPTER XXX.

LONDON OUT OF TOWN.

NO work on London would be complete without some reference to the manner in which Londoners spend their holidays. The annual outing is nowadays a part of town life. The grand tour of the last century has become an institution to be repeated more or less completely every year.

"TRACTS FOR TOURISTS."

I am not sure that a book devoted exclusively to the careful consideration of the comfort of travellers would not be a success. It may be that such a volume exists. I have certainly one in my mind that appeared some five and twenty years ago (when I had scarcely parted company with my teens), and which no doubt is even now obtainable. I refer to "Tracts for Tourists," by my old and valued friend, Mr. F. C.

Burnand. In this excellent *brochure* (which, by the way, was originally illustrated by the late Charles Keene), the author showed how voyaging in peace and quietness could be accomplished. In an early chapter a list of necessaries was given. The traveller was recommended never to leave London without putting some panes of glass in his portmanteau, so that in the event of finding a broken window he might have the wherewithal to mend it! From this it will be seen that Mr. Burnand had thoughtfully considered even the remotest contingencies. It is scarcely necessary to add after this reference to its contents that "Tracts for Tourists," before republication in volume form, originally appeared in the pages of *Punch*. The author had only recently joined "the table" under the genial editorship of the late Mark Lemon. In those distant days he had for colleagues Thackeray, Shirley Brooks, Tom Taylor, Percival Leigh, Charles Keene, W. C. Bennett, George Du Maurier, and John Tenniel. Of all the cheery company only one remains—the last-named. The original editor and his couple of successors have passed away, and Mr. Burnand occupies the chair. He has one comrade, "good Sir John," the Emperor of cartoonists. "Tracts for Tourists," in spite of the light strain in which it is written, contains many a useful hint.

ON THE ROAD.

I have mentioned Thackeray, and the name conjures up visions of family coaches and postboys. When the greatest novelist of the century wrote his "Irish Sketch Book," his "From Cornhill to Cairo," and his "Kickleburys on the Rhine," the thing to do was to take your landau with you and to trust to posting horses for traction. Of course, in these days of railways, when a diligence is almost a curiosity, the old-fashioned mode of progression to which I refer is obsolete. Still, there are worse "ways of going" than coming to town in your own carriage. Some little while since I was driven from Dover to town in a landau. The journey took a couple of days, as we preferred to take it easily. We stopped for the night at Canterbury. We got over some twenty or thirty miles in the early morning, and gave the horses a rest for what remained of the twenty-four hours. This was a good arrangement for bipeds and quadrupeds. The first had plenty of time for "doing" the adjacent country, and the last kept in good condition and enjoyed the trip as much as their owners. It was necessary to choose the main road as some of the country lanes were too narrow to admit of the passage of so large an order as a landau and pair. But granted this, and the choice of a route was unlimited.

Another excellent mode of travelling by road is on the saddle of a bicycle or tricycle. Nowadays there is scarcely a country inn that does not belong to the great wheel union, otherwise the Cycling Tourist Club. "They will do you well" wherever you go; and here is a tip. If you do not want to be cumbered with the small but necessary kit, why not send it beforehand by parcel post? At the cost of a few pence you could despatch your handbag from station to station. No doubt this hint will not be thrown away upon the knights of the road. This is a distinct improvement upon the custom of the man who walked himself and carried his umbrella in a following hansom.

THE CHOICE OF A TRAVELLING COMPANION.

Perhaps the success of the cycle has made walking tours completely out of date. A few years ago it was no uncommon thing for two friends to decide upon "tripping it on foot." Nowadays they will arrange to "cruise upon wheels." And here a very important element in travelling and comfort comes in. The choice of a companion is a matter of vital importance. Of course, if you are married you can have no possible pleasanter traveller than your better seven-eighths. This is manifest for many reasons—perhaps the principal being that any other choice would be

contested by the important fraction referred to. But say that you are a bachelor, and, consequently, fancy free, why, then you have to choose a friend. And here I suggest an *à propos* conundrum. When is a friend not a friend? When he is a fellow traveller. This is, in five cases out of six, the correct answer. There is nothing so trying to friendship as the hardships of a tour. In my time, I have made many a trip with an intimate friend, and it is my pride and my pleasure to know that he and I are still, in spite of this companionship, on terms of intimate friendship. But that our relations are so satisfactory, is, I believe, entirely due to my tact and good humour. *En voyage*, I make tact and good humour the *spécialités de la maison.*

"We will go to Paris," my friend used to say, "by Dieppe. Capital route, see Rouen, and get to a station close to the Boulevards. Cheap too."

"Certainly," I would reply, hating the sea like poison, and fearful of that possibly dreadful passage from Newhaven.

A few hours later I would get a telegram, saying that my friend had decided that we should go viâ Dover and Calais. I would joyfully respond, "Why, certainly."

"We will put up at Meurice's," my fellow traveller would suggest when we had got to Amiens. "Old-fashioned house, capital food, and I like the Rue de Rivoli better than the Boulevards."

"Quite so," I would respond meekly.

Then when we arrived at the terminus I would find that our luggage had been deposited in one of the omnibuses belonging to the Grand Hotel.

"You see I think after all it is better than Meurice's," my friend would explain; "it is nearer the theatres, you know, and the *table d'hôte* breakfast is excellent."

I used to acquiesce. Then my companion would draw up a route. We were to go to Bâle, Lausanne, Berne, Interlaken, Lucerne, and come back express from Geneva. I would be delighted. However, in spite of the expression of satisfaction I was not in the least surprised when, at the end of our trip, I found that we had avoided Switzerland, and had travelled exclusively on the Rhine and in Holland.

The golden rule for getting on with a travelling companion is to submit your will to his. Let him have his own way. There cannot be two people "personally conducting a tour," so retire in his favour.

Nowadays it is rather fashionable to be poor, so there is no disgrace in travelling "third" in preference to "first." I fancy that the French have a proverb that the *première classe* is only patronised by millionaires, English, and fools. That occasionally it is necessary to take the highest-priced ticket goes without saying. For instance, the administration at times have a custom of only having first class car-

riages travelling *grande vitesse.* If you go second or third you must be satisfied with *petite vitesse.* The second choice is tantamount to doubling, or even trebling, the time required for the journey. And here, *à propos de bottes,* let me say that, if you are going to cross a mountain pass, don't go by the night diligence, but take a carriage. If you are going by boat in Italy, it will be as well to enquire when those boats leave port, when they arrive at their destination, and if they carry cargo. One particularly hot autumn I decided to return from Rome by water. The capital of Christendom was placarded with posters telling of the delights of the line of Somebody *frères.* I determined to patronise the firm. I went on board at Civita Vecchia at 12 noon, and found that the boats started at midnight. Then when I was imprisoned on board I discovered that the ship was carrying a cargo of green figs. A little later I noticed the decks and berths swarming with worms. I got off at Leghorn. As I was leaving I noticed that the cargo was being changed—the good ship was leaving the figs at Leghorn and taking on board any number of pigs destined for a midnight cruise to Genoa!

IS IT NECESSARY TO TAKE A COURIER?

Supposing that money is no consideration, ought one to take a courier? Personally, I say no; al-

though, of course, it is pleasant to have some one to relieve one of the necessity of paying hotel bills, looking after luggage, and taking tickets. Beyond this a courier is practically valueless. In these days of universal travelling you don't want him as a guide. And even if you do, you are lucky if he knows more than your Bædeker or Murray can tell you.

"What is that, Karl?" you ask.

"I think, sare, it is a church," replies your guide, companion, but scarcely friend.

"And that?"

"It may be a town hall, or perhaps a theatre."

And you have to fall back upon your red books. On the whole, even with untold gold at your command, it seems to me that a courier is superfluous.

A FEW TIPS FOR THE THOUGHTLESS.

If you have gone over the same ground before, it will be your own fault if you have not made notes in your diary. I always jot down my impressions of a hotel *en route*. I could travel half over Europe and know where to go and what hotel to avoid. As to luggage, of course the less you take the better, as "extra weight" mounts up terribly the moment you get quit of the influence exercised by the great English railway companies. Still, never travel without your dress clothes, a frock coat, and a hat box

Paris, Vienna, and Berlin are on a par with London, and you should be quite as particular in your apparel in those capitals as you are when you are lounging in the Park or strolling down Bond Street in the height of the season. Of course, evening dress is indispensable. If you do not take it with you, you may be sure that before your trip is over you will have urgently required it. Then, again, it is always as well to carry your passport. You may never be asked for it, but still to have it about you gives you a sense of security that nothing else can afford. Finally, take the advice of my old and valued friend Sir Henry Thompson and never drink water on the Continent *pur et simple.* As a matter of fact, it will not be *pur et simple,* but very much the reverse. Take cold tea in profusion and (the least advertised) aërated water. Last tip of all. When you have had enough of the Continent come back to England. You will then learn that (alas!) there is no place like home.

CHAPTER XXXI.

LONDONERS AND THEIR SUMMER HOLIDAYS.

ABOUT August the arrival platforms at the various London termini of the railway companies are crowded with young gentlemen who have come home to their parents to enjoy from six weeks to a couple of months' vacation. Those who have returned from inland schools expect a trip to the seaside, and those who have just left the sea breezes suggest other pleasant resorts. The young gentlemen are on their best behaviour, and if some of their "toppers" have served as inadequate substitutes for footballs during the journey the incident is of no lasting importance. For the moment the juvenile hopefuls are as "good as gold." For some days they will probably remain in this pleasant disposition. Then as they grow accustomed to the clemency of their parents, and forget the discipline of the Rev. Dr. Birch, they will become as "good as silver." And later still silver

will be exchanged for copper, and not improbably for brass. When they arrive at this stage of behaviour the worst will not be over, but only just begun. I think we may take it that the holidays will be made up of a week of gold, three days of silver, forty-eight hours of copper, and a month and a half of brass. Under these circumstances, it will be wise to get your family to the seaside well before gold turns into the baser metals. If you do not, the chances are that your most cherished books will be dirty-fingered, your most valuable carpets stamped out, and your neighbours for miles round set at open defiance.

SEASIDE LODGING FOR "YOUNG HOPEFUL."

Some years ago there was published a *brochure* (I believe of American origin) called "Helen's Babies," in which were described the doings of two naughty but otherwise pleasant children. And earlier still—if I am not mistaken, a third of a century since—the proprietors of *Punch* gave to the world an excellent volume, in which John Leech had drawn and coloured a series of cartoons showing the chief incidents of "Master Jacky's Holidays." As a father I do not regret that this last work is out of print. So far as I can remember, the artist had shown how very bad his hero could be. In one picture Jacky was seen playing a game of cricket in

the drawing-room, in another he was discovered "repairing" the furniture by hammering superfluous nails into the backs of the dining-room chairs, in a third he was practising the performance of a "foot-balancer," with the baby instead of a barrel on the soles of his boots. Altogether Jacky was having a better time of it than his parents, and I think I may add his sisters, his cousins, his uncles, and his aunts. Nowadays Jacky's sons and even grandsons are better behaved than their unruly ancestor. Still, there is something in the principle of heredity, and consequently it is as well to get to the seaside as quickly as possible. Having children of my own (excellent boys—like their father the very pattern of propriety), I have some little experience of what is best to be done. It is as well to go down unaccompanied (save by your excellent better half) to the seaside place you propose to honour with your patronage. I have known the most promising lodging lost by the appearance of Young Hopeful and his brethren. A lady of my acquaintance a short time since had just arranged for apartments on particularly beneficial terms, when everything was spoiled by the sudden appearance of her two good boys.

"No, thank you, ma'am," exclaimed the landlady, a spinster of mature age; "I'd rather not let the lodgings. I don't like children."

"But," said the fond mother, "these are the best of boys. Everyone says that they have the faces of angels."

"That may be," replied the landlady; "but you don't say what kind of angels! My experience is that the better they look the worse they are."

And nothing could shake the decision of the lodging-keeper, and my friend and her boys had to go elsewhere.

Another reason why we should look out for apartments without accompanists is to escape the chance of infection. Some householders at the seaside have a very elastic conscience anent the subject of illness. In the opinion of many who wish to get rid of their "drawing-rooms" and their "parlour-floors" whooping cough is "a slight cold," scarlet fever "a harmless rash," and typhoid merely "a bad headache." In August the lodgings are fairly free from danger, but in May, June, and the early part of July there is always a good deal of what I may term "floating illness" about. People who have children who have just recovered from this and that are very fond of sending them to the East Kent coast to regain complete recovery. All you can do when you find this has been done is to charge the landlady with having infringed the statute. If you are a barrister and can back up your charge with a little legal knowledge so

much the better. And after doing this there is nothing else to be done.

YOUNG PHILANTHROPISTS ON THE COMMON GREEN.

In securing a seaside residence for our youngsters it is not always advisable to attempt to obtain for them the questionable advantage of what may be termed "a common green." A recreation ground "open to all residents of Imperial Terrace" may be very pleasant for the seniors, but occasionally the juniors find their chief amusement in quarrelling with one another. The occupants of "the common green" frequently split into sets. The Browns refuse to talk to the Joneses, and both boycott the Robinsons. Then Young Hopeful, if he is of an ingenious turn of mind, utilises the backs of the houses as a sort of contributory savings bank. I have heard of a case where certain young gentlemen of a benevolent turn of mind appeared as "mysterious minstrels," with blue spectacles, wideawake hats, and mufflers complete, and set themselves to collect pence for a charitable object. Provided with a toy banjo and a miniature tambourine, they regaled the occupants of the Imperial Terrace with a selection of comic songs chosen from the *répertoire* of the neighbouring sands. Until their efforts in the cause of philanthropy were discovered by their parents these young

disciples of Howard and Wilberforce collected something like three or four shillings a day. The collections, I have heard, were devoted to the encouragement of that languishing branch of trade, the "real Turkish sherbet" and miscellaneous sweet-stuff industry. I have been told that these same boy-benefactors, on the regatta night, having organised a small display of fireworks on "the common green," proposed to admit the public to the grounds—a privilege hitherto reserved for the exclusive use of the *bonâ fide* residents of Imperial Terrace. However, that the public might not be overburdened with a sense of unsolicited obligation, the boys, with a tact considerably in advance of their years, proposed charging each candidate for admission the sum of twopence, as a sort of complimentary entrance fee. No doubt the sum realised by this thoughtful arrangement would have been expended on the further support of the decayed industry to which I have already referred. But, as ill-fortune would have it, the first persons to seek admission were the parents of the Masters Hopeful. This would have been a matter of small importance had a member of the firm been at the gate, but cruel fate decided that a sympathetic friend should have been left in charge, who knew not Mr. and Mrs. Hopeful, senior. This sympathetic friend, being a little misty in his arithmetic, informed the candidates

for admission that the charge was "twopence each, or sixpence for the two." An *exposé* followed—with tearful results.

THE DANGERS OF THE SANDS.

But if "a common green" is not always a success, the sands can scarcely be called a triumph. I mean, of course, if the sands are sands with the customary accessories. The children who patronise the golden strand have the advantage of learning a number of comic songs better suited for the seaside than the drawing-room. It is all very well for hoarse-voiced niggers to describe the advantages or disadvantages of "a pimple on the nose" to the presumably indifferent sad sea waves, but such topics of conversation, even when introduced by youngsters of blood and breeding, are a little out of place in my lady's boudoir. Further, the perambulating phrenologists may interfere with a boy's future by suggesting that as he is witty, rich and virtuous, he should "marry a young lady from a restaurant and open a little public 'ouse, in which he was sure to do well." Such proposals, if adopted by a lad of an impressionable disposition, might compromise most seriously a contemplated career in diplomacy, the army, the navy, or at the forensic (as distinguished from the tavern) bar. But perhaps the most serious danger of all is

the off chance of the spread of infection. Some little while ago I saw two lads quarrelling.

"I tell you what," said one to the other, "when my big brother comes down he will give it you. When he comes you will catch it!"

"Catch what?" was the reply, "a licking?"

"No, the whooping cough!"

But perhaps, after all, in these days of cabs and omnibuses you can catch whatever there is to be caught as easily in London as elsewhere. If the children are all day long in the open air, and take advantage of the inviting proximity of the sea, they should be as fever proof at a watering place as in town. However, when possible it is as well to keep on the safe side.

In your own self-defence it is as well to supply amusements for the children. If you do not you may be sure (if they are worth their salt) they will take the matter into their own hands, to your ultimate disadvantage.

Bicycles in moderation are pleasant distraction, and even fishing (under the guidance of an experienced boatman) is permissible. If you do not grant these concessions the boys will either hire a gig and try to drive tandem or perch themselves on some exceedingly slippery and dangerous rocks in pursuit of the wily minnow. Meet your children half way. Strive to be their "guides, philosophers,

and friends." If you are not, you may be sure they will lead you a pretty dance.

In conclusion, if the youngsters are a little lively, it will be only a proof that they are in the vigour of good health. After all, boys will be boys, for the reason, presumably, that they cannot possibly be girls. So long as they are truthful and kind to animals, and fond of their parents, what more can you want? If they smash windows, wear out carpets, and upset expensive china, it is only for three months in the year. Nay more, even if they celebrate (rather after date) the Diamond Jubilee by hanging in their bedroom four dozen lighted Japanese lanterns, what does it matter? The chances are they won't burn the house down, and even if they do, are you not insured? The holidays are soon over, and when they come to a conclusion you miss your boys, although they may be "pickles." When all is said and done they have only been following a precedent. It is unnecessary to go into the matter too strictly, but it may be that that precedent may have been set by yourself. The boy is the father of the man, and who can recall the freaks of childhood? As a rule, it is the naughty boy who becomes a bishop, and the boy who is "much too good to live" who performs that painful operation known as "coming a cropper."

CHAPTER XXXII.

LONDONERS AND THE CHANNEL.

ABOUT the time of year when the House is up, the clubs are closed, and only barristers desirous of "vacation business" remain in town, everyone who can afford the luxury of a trip to the Continent thinks of "Crossing the Channel." To most of us it is not a very pleasant thought, scarcely (as Mr. Burnand would say) a "happy thought." But Englishmen who would set foot upon foreign shores, must face the difficulty and overcome their repugnance to *mal de mer*. After all, nowadays, in the very worst weather, thanks to the magnificent boats of the South Eastern and Chatham and Dover Companies, the journey only takes a little over an hour. I believe the *Lord Warden* and the *Calais Douvres*, if put to it, can cover the sea between harbour and harbour, in fifty-five minutes. I need scarcely say, that this is a vast improvement

upon the times of long ago, when the *Foam* and her sister ships used to journey slowly and surely from port to port. I fancy the vessels to which I refer still exist, and some times appear in the night time, but the day mail passengers have the advantage of the pick of the Companies' fleet. And nine times out of ten the passage is charming—that is to say, when the equinoctial gales (like the spot stroke) are barred. But the latter, unfortunately, are of villainous quality and rapidly pull down the average. Still, crossing the Channel is a solid or rather liquid fact and cannot be shirked by a Londoner. He must visit Paris, which, according to the Institute of Journalists, is a part of the London District.

CONCERNING THE CHANNEL TUNNEL.

Until patriotism interfered there seemed a chance of escaping the terrors of the waves by getting from England to France under sea and under ground. Some years ago I was honoured with an invitation to inspect the Channel Tunnel. The prime mover in the scheme was present, and the party he entertained were statesmen, soldiers, and journalists. After we had been carried in a truck some little distance, and had walked through a hole about five feet four in height and width a further distance, we came to the end of the excavation. The boring was being

carried on with the assistance of compressed air, and the works were illuminated with what was then a novelty, the electric light. After we had admired all that was to be seen we were entertained at luncheon. Everyone was confident of success, and the idea of a scare was scouted. Two of our party were military men, and I was amused to note the prime mover in the scheme suggesting a plan for the defence of the mouth of the Tunnel. The warriors courteously listened, but did not seem convinced. This visit was paid in the days when the Channel Tunnel was scarcely "contentious business." It had been approved by Beaconsfield and Gladstone, and the murmurs of the generals were then undeveloped. A story is told of the late "Professor" Percival Leigh, that when inviting his friends to eat some mushrooms set before them he suggested that although the best medical authorities declared the fungi in question to be highly poisonous, "he did not think so." In like manner, although most of the great military experts have declared the Channel Tunnel would weaken our powers of defence, "I don't think so." And I never feel more confident on the point than when I am on the seas between Dover and Calais in tempestuous weather.

TRAVELLING OLD STYLE.

Charles Dickens, in his "Uncommercial Traveller," and Thackeray, in one of his "Christmas Books," have described the first primitive attempts at travelling with the assistance of steam locomotion. In the forties, a gentleman of means got to the coast in his chariot, shipped it on board the packet, and continued his journey when he reached "the other side." Not long ago I came upon an inn in Dover nestling under the shadow of the Castle, which, from its sign, must have been close to the departure stage of the steam packets. I am not sufficiently learned in the history of "one of the most important of our Cinque Ports" to say whether the boat ever started from that part of the place which is farthest away from the Lord Warden Hotel. However, there within a stone's throw of the new pier and the large *caravanserai* that is now the prosperous Hotel Burlington, was "the Mail Packet Inn." To reach Boulogne from Folkestone, is now an easy matter, but in the days of the past the favourite route was from St. Katharine's Docks. When I was a child, I was constantly going to Boulogne viâ the Thames, and then the steamers were called the *Albion*, the *Panther*, and the *City of Cologne*. I have been told that the G.S.N.Co.—an association with a very

large fleet—moves its boats from station to station as they grow older. For instance, when new, a vessel may run between London and Bordeaux, then from London to Margate, then ultimately appear as a ferry-boat on the coast of Japan. I wonder what has became of the *Albion* and what has been the fate of a steamer still older, the *Father Thames.* In days gone by they were thronged with passengers who had every confidence in their sea-going qualities. I have braved in their cabins (but in a half-hearted fashion) many a bad passage. Peace be to their timbers if still afloat, or if broken up, to their ashes.

THE CURSE OF THE CHANNEL.

On a bright sunshiny day there is nothing more charming than a run over from Folkestone to Boulogne, or from Dover to Calais. Those who haunt the departure stages of the two southern watering-places, will observe many a familiar face on the boat that leaves the Admiralty Pier at 1 p.m. and returns at 5.15. This vessel is particularly favoured by the Bar during the vacation, and one popular Recorder whose silk gown was constantly worn at the C. C. C. in leading Treasury prosecutions, is frequently seen pacing its quarter-deck. But when the winds begin to blow, and the waves to rise, life on board a Channel steamship becomes less tolerable.

There are any number of remedies for *mal de mer*, but none absolutely and invariably reliable. It is a wise precaution to seat oneself amidships—just in rear of the funnels and exactly between the paddle boxes. Fresh air is very desirable, but sometimes it has to be bought at the cost of a drenching. A glass of champagne before starting or a lemon squash have both their admirers, and I have been credibly informed that chloral taken under doctor's advice is serviceable. But when I hear remedies for sea-sickness considered, I always think of that wonderful series of pictures by Leech that amused our fathers years ago. The cuts showed how a man should take a hearty meal before leaving the shore, and then stand firmly in the centre of the steamer with his eyes fixed upon a distant object, and accommodating his body to the movements of the vessel. "And then the result would probably be this," was the legend of a final sketch showing the poor traveller in a condition of comic collapse.

RIVALS ON THE SEA.

I think, on the whole, Englishmen are better sailors than Frenchmen. Certainly an inspection of "Mossoo" after a "dirty passage" is not calculated to increase the prestige of "The Great Nation." He generally leans on the arm of his wife and is utterly

regardless of appearances. His buttonhole of the Legion of Honour is uncared for and he is feeble to a degree. When asked brusquely whether he wishes to go to "Charing Cross, Cannon Street, St. Paul's or Victoria," he replies in a broken voice that he desires to be taken to "Londres." Some years since, I went over to Calais on a perfectly calm day (so it appeared to all the English on board) *en route* for the south. As it was a trial trip, we had shipped some *douaniers* who were to inspect our luggage while we were half seas over. When we got into port at Calais, we found that the representatives of the French Customs had been too ill to attend to their duties! And yet as I have said, the sea appeared to us sturdy Britons as calm as a mill pond. I suppose the affair is a matter of temperament combined with nationality.

THE RIGHT OF SEARCH.

Having referred to the *douane* I must confess that unless one's luggage is examined *en route*, the right of search is distinctly a nuisance. If you happen to have a uniform, it is a good idea to put it on the top of your clothes when travelling abroad. The *douaniers* have a certain respect for the military, and when they see the scarlet and gold their inspection becomes perfunctory. And you may take

it for granted that the foreigners will never be surprised at any insular eccentricity. Many years ago I was entrusted with a box containing wedding cake. Of course the officer of *douane* desired that it should be exhibited.

"What is this droll kind of comestible?" he asked.

"A sort of plum pudding," I promptly replied.

"Very good. You English are inexplicable;" and he chalked the cover of the box. He was not in the least astonished at my carrying a plum pudding about with me. I venture to believe what caused his surprise was that I had overlooked the roast beef, the holly and mistletoe, and the mince pies!

PROS AND CONS.

In conclusion, the Channel has lost most of its terrors in these days of *Lord Wardens*, *Leopold the Seconds*, *Duchesses of York*, and *Calais Douvres*. A good passage is almost a certainty. On enquiry at the London termini one can always find the condition of affairs at the coast. You know whether it is calm or "rather rough." If you are tied to time you brave the weather, and in the event of there being a gale trust to the reviving effects of the *buffets* at Boulogne and Calais. But if it is calm the passage over is simply "a dream." It is a thousand pities that (thanks to the treachery of the weather) sometimes that dream is changed into a nightmare.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

LONDON UNDER DOCTOR'S ORDERS.

As the season draws towards its close the stress and tear of the business of either work or pleasure begins to tell upon the average Londoner. A barrister well served with briefs, a doctor with a long list of patients, an editor, assisted by a large staff of contributors, have each in his way a good deal to do. As January is lost in Easter, and Whitsuntide is passed and forgotten in July, the longing for rest and recreation grows stronger and stronger. The wish becomes an earnest desire, when one's guide, philosopher and medical friend, Dr. Farren Farce, takes one by the arm, and looking one in the face through his benevolent spectacles, utters a remonstrance:

"Dear friend," says the philanthropic physician, "you are not appearing well. You want another rest. Come to me to-morrow and I will tell you what to do."

So on the following morning one repairs to the pleasant mansion of the ablest of men and receives orders to be off to Cairo or the Canaries, Homburg or Harrogate, or if complacent, a tour round the world, beginning with the Cape. Whether the advice is taken or not is another affair.

RESULT OF NEGLECTING A SUGGESTION.

And now to consider the matter methodically. Should Dr. Farren Farce's advice be followed? Why, certainly, if possible. When the physician steps in and interferes in the march of work, it is as well to pay some attention to his cautions. It pays in the long run. As a stitch in time saves nine, so does a week in the country, passed at the proper season, sometimes dispense with the necessity of knocking off work for a year and a day.

So we all agree that when the doctors speak we should obey; and having come to this decision follow our own devices. For all that the matter is scarcely a subject that can be cured by jesting.

THE ROTTEN ROW CURE.

Very often one receives orders to take to riding. Of course, if you happen to have a banking account which never sinks to less on the credit side in the pounds column than five figures in your pass-book, the

matter is as simple as possible. All you have to do is to find a horse up to your weight. Having done this (which you generally can manage with the assistance of a friend), you can ride to your heart's content in Rotten Row. But supposing you have neglected to take the necessary biscuits, or your build is hereditarily stalwart, or from some other unaccountable reason, you turn the scales at the club at twenty-two stone, why, then you must travel further north. I believe by arrangement you can always secure a nice ride in the early morning at the Zoo on the back of an elephant, but the mount naturally has to be ordered well in advance.

And here let me suggest that there can be no sight more instructive and amusing to the Intelligent Foreigner than a review of "the Liver Brigade" in the early morning. When the shadows of the trees bordering Rotten Row are still of measurable length, it is delightful to watch the riders as they pass and repass, now singly, now in couples, now in groups. Here comes a famous artist in black and white, looking like a farmer in his workaday clothes. He is followed by an eminent Q.C. much in the same costume. They are succeeded by judges, editors, statesmen, and now and again by a bishop. Pot hats, caps, even straw hats are used as a headgear. Collars turned up, and suits of the loudest material. If the various celebrities could be put as they are

in the scenes of their daily professional exploits they would certainly cause a profound sensation. For instance, how could the Q.C. cross-examine in grey dittos and a red necktie? How could "my lord" deliver judgment in an old woollen comforter? How could the ecclesiastic preach in a cap calculated to capture the taste of a costermonger? But in Rotten Row everything is acceptable. I believe Buffalo Bill, when he was last in England, frequently appeared beneath the trees in his professional toggery. If he did I am quite sure that his eminence as a Society lion, and not the unconventionality of his costume, attracted attention. Were a North American Indian, of the old-fashioned Cooper novel sort, to gallop through the Row, he would attract little or no attention. All that would be said would, no doubt, be uttered by the eminent artist in black and white to whom I have already referred.

"Yes," my talented friend would observe, "very nice indeed as a study, but his mocassins are all wrong. If you wear feathers on your trousers you should also wear feathers on your boots."

SHORT CUTS TO HEALTH.

Now and again you come upon stories of the marvellous effects of specialities. For instance, there is one very well known in service circles as a certain

cure for gout. Several of my soldier and sailor friends have tried it, and with great success. The story goes that the members of a certain very distinguished "service" club had very many years ago a reputation for speaking on occasion harshly to the waiters, and when much irritated making use of such improper expressions as "Dear me!" "Dash it!" and even (but this, of course, only on the rarest of rare occasions) "Hang it!" The lamentable exhibitions of anger were entirely attributable to the prevalence of gout.

According to the legend, by a sort of miracle it became known to the members of the club that the good sisters of a certain convent in foreign parts supplied for twenty-five francs, a box of powders that contained 365 packets. By taking one of the nuns' prescriptions daily for a year a cure was performed, and the patient, from the most irritable became one of the most amiable of men.

Such is the story. It is said (and I believe with truth) that nowadays the members of the service club in question are so gentle in their manners, that they serve as a contrast to the comparatively blustering bishops in a well known literary *cercle* located in the near neighbourhood.

However, lest it may be thought that this specific for gout amongst the military is invariably infallible, it is only right to say that I found it not entirely satis-

factory in one instance. A very old and valued friend of mine tried it.

"Yes," said he, "it certainly seemed to be affecting me. But after I had got through half my box of powders my doctor stopped the cure, as he said that the remedy in gout was giving me the yellow jaundice!"

But to be entirely just I must admit that my friend, although one of the best and smartest soldiers I have ever met, had only held a commission in the Auxiliary Forces. To take proper effect the cure for gout should be tried upon a Major-General at the least—indeed, the nuns (so I have been told) prefer a Field-Marshal.

CALAIS OR CAIRO?

However, it is sometimes possible to carry out doctor's orders without resorting to the extreme measures conveyed in the medical commands. For instance, only the other day I had a proof of the convenient manner of obeying the spirit rather than the words of the prescription. A very old and valued friend of mine is accustomed to compare every now and again what may be termed our mutual ailments. As a rule, whoever commences the comparison has to submit to the other going one better, or rather, I should say, one worse. If I assert I have a bad headache my friend not only has a raging pain in the

forehead, but that pain extends right down the neck. If he tells me that he believes he has incipient lumbago, I assure him that I am quite certain I am in the first stage of rapidly-creeping paralysis.

"I did not sleep last night," said my friend, a day or two ago.

"Why, I have had chronic insomnia ever since the middle of March," was my prompt reply, going, according to the rule of the game, one worse.

"The only thing to cure me," continued my comrade in adversity, "is a sea voyage to Cairo."

"I feel convinced I shall never be myself until I have been to Australia and back on a trading vessel," I put in again, scoring cleverly.

"Quite so," said my friend, "but unfortunately I can only spare half a week."

"And I the inside hours of a Sunday."

The last statements were not only interesting to ourselves, but had the additional merit of being absolutely accurate. So we determined, as the lesser commanded the greater, we would see what could be done within the inside hours of a Sunday.

"Why not go to Boulogne by the *Marguerite?*"

But that necessitated very early rising, and my friend and I came to the conclusion that as we were both suffering from insomnia we ought not to think of moving until 9 a.m. I am not sure that we had any doctor's opinion to support our contention, but

we had a pious belief that to stay in bed until the sun was ready to receive was emphatically the right thing to do.

"Why not go to Calais and back?" asked my friend, as if he were putting a conundrum full of pleasing possibilities.

"Yes," I answered. "Why not? As a matter of fact I believe that the *buffet* at the station is a most excellent one. Is not lunch a safe cure for insomnia?"

"Unquestionably, if taken after an appetite-creating sea voyage. And we could avoid the risk of endangering our health by getting up too early, as the mail train does not leave Victoria until eleven o'clock."

A PLEASANT JOURNEY.

This consideration decided us to make the experiment. So a few minutes before the appointed hour we appeared on the platform in that light and airy costume the delight of tourists of the better class.

"Shall I get your luggage labelled, sir?" asked an attentive guard.

"We have no luggage," was our triumphant reply. And, carrying nothing but two thin overcoats and a couple of genuine Sunday newspapers, we took our places in a comfortable compartment and started for Dover. We devoured the contents of the couple of

genuine Sunday newspapers with the usual delight. They were, as is their custom of a Sabbath morn, replete with excellent matter. Then when we reached Chatham we laid them aside. Our insomnia did not permit us to sleep; so we only closed our eyes and allowed ourselves to drift into unconsciousness. When we opened our eyes (with a start) we found ourselves at Dover.

"Luggage labelled, sir?" asked the guard.

"We have no luggage!" we replied with pride. Fortunately our eminently respectable appearance disarmed unworthy suspicion, and we were not arrested as Anarchists.

We embarked on board the *Lord Warden*. We met several friends who were going on to Paris. They were not so sure of our destination.

"I suppose," said one of them with detective-like sagacity, "that you propose crossing the Channel?"

As we were seated on lounging chairs on the upper deck, and the steamboat had already left the Dover pier, we admitted the soft impeachment.

"I wonder how people come to think of such clever things," I murmured to my comrade. To which question he languidly replied that he considered the rival to Sherlock Holmes "a stupid ass."

After this I was silent. We spent an hour in drinking the pure air of the Channel. The sea was

as smooth as a mill pond, and the breezes were delightful.

A COUPLE OF HOURS IN FRANCE.

We arrived. As we walked on shore the rival to Sherlock Holmes made another discovery. "If you are not going further, I suppose you will stay at Calais?"

Again my comrade muttered "stupid ass," and led the way to the *buffet*.

I shall never forget the luncheon. It was excellent. *Poulet rôti* with *pommes sautés*, some *petits pois* and a *langue de bœuf, sauce piquante*. This, with a bottle of white *vin ordinaire*, some black coffee, and a *chasse*, came to twelve francs.

"*Avez-vous de monnaie pour un sovereign—un pièce de vingt-cinq francs?*" asked my friend, in that admirable French which in years gone by was the envy and astonishment of his school-fellows at Eton.

"Certainly, sare," returned the waiter," "I give you eleven shillings change. Will you read *The Observer*, *The Sunday Times*, or *Punch?*"

We returned to the *Lord Warden* in comfort. We took up our position in two well-situated arm-chairs. We watched the luggage of the poor passengers from Paris and Brussels coming down

the slope with more or less expedition, and more or less wear and tear to the fabric of the boxes.

We got back to Dover, after a most delightful voyage, by about five o'clock. Tea was awaiting us at the station. We quaffed a cup, and, once more closing our eyes and resigning ourselves to unconsciousness, got back to town by a little after seven o'clock. The next morning I met my comrade's doctor. He told me how he had directed his patient to take a sea passage to Egypt.

"But you, dear friend, seem the picture of health," he exclaimed. "*You* don't want to go to Cairo."

"No," I replied, "I don't, because I have been to Calais."

And with this apparently pointless remark I brought our interview to an abrupt conclusion—like this chapter.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

TWO CITIES IN FORTY-EIGHT HOURS.

I AM told (and I have every reason for believing that the assertion is true) that a large number of Londoners never take a holiday. Professional men have their "close time," which mercifully forces them to desist from their labour. For instance, the barrister, unless he makes himself a slave to vacation work, gets away in the middle of August, and is not wanted back in the Royal Palace in the Strand until the end of October. Then the doctor, prescribing for himself, takes a clear two months in the dead season of the year. But the journalist (especially if he be an editor), like the late Lord Tennyson's Brook, "goes on for ever." A friend of mine, who some years ago had been following the "active duties of his profession" for any number of years, had a very unpleasant reminder that "human nature after all is human nature." One day he met that eminent

physician, Dr. Farren Farce, in a railway carriage. The other occupants of the compartment were a married couple—a man who seemed to be a confirmed invalid, and his devoted wife. The husband was feeble to the last degree, with lack-lustre eyes, and the gait of a nonogenarian who has borne his years badly. At the station *en route* the poor fellow was helped out of the train by his sorrowful and sympathetic helpmate, and struggled away towards the exit gate, with the assistance of the ticket collector and a couple of porters.

"You should feel a special interest in that group," said Dr. Farren Farce to my friend, "because, my dear fellow, unless you immediately knock off work and take a complete holiday you will find yourself in the same plight within the next fortnight."

And the eminent physician was a true prophet. My friend did not act upon the medico's advice, and became absolutely incapacitated for the lightest work for no less than two years. He found himself without memory, without energy, without everything. He was a perfect wreck, and it took twenty-four calendar months to bring him back to his customary condition. So when Dr. Farren Farce takes me by the arm, and, calling me "dear friend," tells me to "pull up," I invariably do my best to obey his commands. And it really is wonderful how little time you need to follow the prescription. As I am nothing

if not practical, I will do my best to show in how short a space the thing can be done. I will suppose myself a London journalist at the end of the nineteenth century, who cannot possibly get away from town for more than three week-days. I may do what I please with Sunday and Monday; Tuesday and Wednesday are entirely at my service; but I have to be at the office on Thursday. How am I to get the complete rest the Dr. Farren Farce has ordered for his "dear friend" in the first four days of the week? We will see.

A JOURNEY ABROAD.—PARIS FOR CHOICE.

If you have been very hard pressed, and have not had leisure to leave your native country for some time, there is no better place for a complete change than foreign parts. I think I may say that the golden rule for the overworked is "when in doubt try Paris." And the regulation (like a similar decree in the game of whist) will usually resolve into trumps. Yes, there is no place like the capital of France for the weary journalist whose ears are deaf to any sound but Fleet Street echoes. When a man has become a burden to himself and a nuisance to his neighbours he had better go to Paris—he will find the journey there beneficial, and pleasanter than a trip either to Bath or Coventry. Then there is the way of going:

the Newhaven-Dieppe route is very pleasant, especially in the summer; the boats are now always excellent, and the passage takes only half-a-dozen hours; but if you are very pressed for time I think you cannot do better than to trust yourself and your fortunes (represented by a small Gladstone bag) to the South Eastern and Chatham and Dover Railways. If you are single, there is no reason why you should not travel by night; but if you are to be accompanied by your wife, you had better make your journey in the daytime. There is nothing like sunlight for facing your enemy—and by the foe I do not mean your better seven-eighths, but the sea. And at all times you will find the after-effects of the night travelling rather trying. The shadow of the Calais lights will cast a gloom over your *déjeuner*, and the long journey between "the label on Mary's heart," and the "ground surrounding the Tour Eiffel" will spoil the pleasure of the afternoon walk on the boulevards, the dinner (say) at Bignon's and the *fauteuil* at the Vaudeville. So make up your mind to a daylight voyage and a good night's rest. You will not regret your decision, although you may possibly sigh as you think of the time when packing at five, eating at six, starting at eight, and Paris in the dawn of the following morning, were matters of course.

WHAT TO TAKE AND HOW TO TAKE IT.

I will assume that I, in my character of Dr. Farren Farce's "dear friend," have decided to "pop over to Paris." Believing courteously that the presence of my better seven-eighths, although doubling the expense, quadruples the pleasure of the journey, I have taken coupons for two. My first anxiety is about the luggage. I explain that if I register the Gladstone bag there will be delay at the Paris terminus, and delay means no *table d'hôte* at the Grand. For the regulation (which is a trifle stricter than the laws of the Medes and Persians) declares that no would-be reveller shall enter the *salle à manger* after half-past seven. And as (when I am in Paris) I am nothing if not greedy, this rule is of the utmost importance. So I take my Gladstone bag, my hat-box, and a roll of coats with me in the carriage. My bag contains the regulation necessaries, inclusive of evening clothes for myself, and several "dreams in satin and lace" belonging to my better seven-eighths; the hat-box, besides the go-to-meeting topper, all that was crowded out of the bag; and the roll of coats beyond the garments named, all the things that have been crowded out of the hat-box. It is, consequently, a relief to me that the Calais *douanier* (a gentleman who, commencing with

an extremely military cap, suddenly drops into mufti from his chin downwards) does not order the roll of coats to be examined. If, instead of marking the bundle with a "2," he had insisted upon its being opened, he would have been surprised at the vastness and variety of its contents. Later on, when I ask what have become of my collars, my boot-jack, my slippers, my frock-coat, my writing-packet, my sponges, my toilette requisites, my white ties, my reserve of cigars, and my prayer-book, I am told, and accurately told, that they are all in the bundle. And here I may hint that as the roll of coats is so full of good things, it is as well to have it firmly strapped up before starting. It is distinctly embarrassing if it comes undone (as I have known it to do) when it is being conveyed by a youthful mariner from the train to the boat.

EN ROUTE BY THE 11 O'CLOCK EXPRESS.

Of the journey to Paris I may note a few points. I am travelling on Sunday (by starting at eleven there is plenty of time for breakfast and church); so I have my favourite journal, which I can read at my leisure. During the journey I notice a vast number of other passengers engaged in the same pleasant occupation. I heartily confess that during the seven hours and three-quarters devoted to the journey from London

to Paris I read it all If your better seven-eighths does not look at the pages of *The Observer*, she glances at those other leaves—the leaves on the trees.

"They are moving!" she exclaims, "I am sure it will be rough!"

It is just possible that there may be a hurricane taking place. Castles and farmhouses, to say nothing of oaks centuries old, may be disappearing before the force of the elements. But even then it is necessary to assure the lady "that it is quite certain to be calm, and that the sea will be like a lake." It would be cruel, it would be unmanly, nay it would be inconvenient to say anything else. Once on board, strongly recommend the ladies' cabin and disappear yourself into the smoking-room. Until you reach Calais the rest had better be silence.

At the *buffet* ask for the menu, order your lunch with promptitude and command a bottle of *Vin rouge ordinaire.* The tedious railway journey to the capital comes to an end at last, and then with luck you get into your voiture and find yourself in the courtyard of the Grand Hotel, in time for one of the best *tables d'hôte* in Paris—which is France—which is the world! Which is London! More or less!

VIEWS OF LIFE FROM AN EXALTED POSITION.

I have been wise. Knowing that the Fair City is *en fête* I have written for a room. I hear that

scores and hundreds of would-be sojourners have been turned away. But to me is given a small book and a key. Then I enter the lift, and ascend to a dizzy height. For the moment I feel like Louis XVI. when, described as the son of the saint, he was invited to "*montez au ciel.*" But I get no further in that direction than the *cinquième étage.* Later on I suggest that something lower would suit me equally well, and I descend. Still, there are worse places in the world than a room "*au cinquième,*" overlooking the boulevards at the Grand Hotel. Of course it is economical, and then I fancy you can see (with the aid of a telescope) down some of the chimneys of the neighbouring houses. But this is a fancy, and nothing more.

I am in Paris, and everything is fresh and charming. It is Monday, and having had a good night's rest I am fit for anything. A "complete tea" (taken in the residential rival to the summit of the Tour Eiffel) has made us regardless of the pangs of hunger until one o'clock, so we determine to see all Paris. How is it done? Nothing easier. Patronise the omnibuses and tramcars. All we have to do is to climb up on a vehicle labelled "Madeleine—Bastille," and you are carried to one or the other. Then get on to a coach bearing the legend "Louvre," and you are taken there. Lastly, you ascend a carriage inscribed "Opera, Place de la Concorde, Ternes," and you are

conveyed everywhere. If you wish to do the place thoroughly, seeing all the latest improvements and new buildings, you can spend hours and hours upon the omnibuses. Let them take you where they will, and supposing you have not been in Paris for a year or two, you will find every yard of the ground interesting.

Of course if you want to go to the Bois (which, by the way, Zola considered finer than our parks and gardens!) you can take a voiture, at 2.50 the hour; ninety minutes will be quite enough of it in the autumn, when the leaves are falling and the lakes look "damp" and cheerless. But I cannot recommend a breakfast at the café either in the wood or the Champs Elysées.

ENGLISH ACTORS IN PARIS.

Of course you have an inclination to visit the theatres. But just now there is nothing new save the last play by Sardou, and a rather naughty piece of magic nonsense. I am in Paris, and what are they playing? Why, any number of revivals. And in all Paris not a single English piece, not a single English actor! Certainly British histrions are at a discount just now in the city of Corneille and Molière!

The last time that an Anglo-Saxon actor made a stand in Paris was, I fancy, when Sothern went over

to Paris during the Exhibition year of 1867, and played *Lord Dundreary*. It was not a success. I am not quite sure whether this appearance was prior or subsequent to the *début* of Charles Mathews in *L'Anglais Timide*. By the way, I have heard a good story told about this last-mentioned piece. I fancy it was originally written by an Englishman (I think Blanchard Jerrold, son of Douglas), and played in London, then translated into French, then re-translated back into English under the title of *As Cool as a Cucumber*; then re-translated again into French when Charles Mathews accepted his Parisian engagement. I remember hearing Charles Mathews saying that his brother actors were utterly surprised at the way he rehearsed the play. In his days it was the custom to merely walk through the part, indicating in the faintest manner the "business." The French, on the contrary, rehearsed everything as if they had a critical audience in front of them instead of an empty auditorium. On "the night" his fellow actors were astounded at "Charley's" success, and I am glad to say gratified. But I must not talk about the drama in Paris, as I have to get back to work in town.

BACK AGAIN TO TOWN.

Tuesday is like unto Monday. I managed to see the Musée Gravin, but when I proposed to visit the

Louvre it was suggested to me by an influential authority "that really it was a pity when one was in Paris to waste time upon things like that." Not that the influential authority did not admire art, "but art was long and lasting and Parisian bonnets ever changing." So the visit to the Louvre was changed to a visit to the Magasins du Louvre. And I must confess there was much more novelty about the latter than the former. Again omnibuses, again *table d'hôte* breakfasts (four *plats au choix*) and dinners. Again new faces, new people, new uniforms, new surroundings, new everything.

When we returned about the middle of the week, after two clear days in Paris, it seemed as if we had been away for months. My friend, Dr. Farren Farce, happened to be on the platform. The eminent physician beamed through his benevolent glasses. Then he smilingly addressed me:

"Dear friend! You were right to take my advice. Now you can go on for another twelvemonth, if need be, without bad results. Satisfactory, dear friend; most satisfactory!"

And the "dear friend" had nothing to say to the contrary.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE LONDONER'S SEARCH FOR HEALTH.

A LONDONER must preserve his health, and at the close of the century the doctors admit rivals to the continental watering-places. Nowadays, it is quite a common experience to hear Sir William This and Sir Robert That speaking with respect of Buxton, Tunbridge Wells, and Harrogate; and the autumn is the pleasantest time for a sojourn at these reviving watering-places. I have been to most of them and think I may, after mature consideration, declare my preference for the half-way town between London and Hastings. The site of "Ye Pantyles" is still fashionable, and in very much the same condition (if one is able to judge from contemporary prints and old guide-books) that it was just a century ago; and furthermore, the death-rate seems as low now as it was a hundred years since.

DR. MAYFAIR AND HIS PATIENTS.

How did I come to travel to "the survival of the Georges"? Why, thanks to "doctor's orders," I

had been sounded and thumped and made to jump on one leg. Then my medical friend had listened to my breathing, with the assistance of a stethoscope, as if he were trying to carry on a conversation with some distant friend through a slightly damaged telephone.

"You want change of air," said the doctor, laying down the stethoscope, "and rest if you can get it."

I explained that rest was out of the question, but I might perhaps steal an occasional "Sunday to Wednesday morning" away from town.

"I suppose," he continued, "you could not arrange to take a yachting tour in the Mediterranean? You could not meet the boat at Marseilles and coast along Southern Europe, touching at Genoa, Leghorn and Venice?"

"Well, no," I replied; "I do not think I could manage it. You see, that sort of thing cannot be got through in fifty-six hours."

"Very likely; very likely," admitted the worthy nineteenth century representative of Æsculapius. "Then how about Skye or Switzerland?"

"Both impossible, for the same consideration."

"Well, I suppose we must fall back upon England," said my medical mentor in a tone of disappointment. "If you can't manage to get to the Mediterranean or Lucerne or even Portree, why you had better go to Tunbridge Wells."

So from this I gathered that the Kentish-Sussex "watering-place" had a kinship (in air) with Switzerland, the Highlands, and Italy. I am nothing if not practical, and so I call upon health-seekers to make a note of this conjecture.

Then Tunbridge had a further advantage. It was within easy reach of town and served by two excellent railway companies. First there was the South Eastern, which landed you at the foot of Mount Pleasant (which by the way might be called Mount Unpleasant when you have to ascend it), close to "favourite residences" on Mount Ephraim and in Calverley Park; and next there was the London, Brighton and South Coast, which invited you to descend (a much better phrase than "turn you out") in the neighbourhood of "Ye Pantyles." The fares of these trains were reasonable, and the time-tables entirely satisfactory. I found I could get to Tunbridge Wells in little over an hour, and that the starting fixtures were well selected. What more could be desired by a Londoner attracted to town by the magnet of editorial work?

"A SNAIL-WAY GUIDE," BY J. ASHBY STERRY.

I have had the advantage of a quiet perusal of the "Snail-Way Guide" of my friend Mr. Ashby Sterry, in which the charms of Tunbridge Wells are duly

set forth. The "Lazy Minstrel" delights in descriptions of the Common, "Ye Pantyles," and the magnificent country surrounding High Rocks and Rusthall Church. To those who admire a series of charming word-pictures, I confidently recommend this little work. It is not in the least like an ordinary guide-book, inasmuch as it comes from the desk of an accomplished essayist, of whom it may be said that his pencil and his pen are equally graceful, equally eloquent, equally fanciful. I have the less hesitation in recommending my friend's "Snail-Way Guide" to the general public, as I have every reason for believing it is out of print, and that its present price is about the dozen times the charge made by the original publishers. So my recommendation cannot be stigmatised as an advertisement, but merely accepted as the possible cause of a fruitless search ending happily at last in the reading-room of the British Museum. If I am not mistaken, a volume once costing only a few coppers can now only be purchased by gold or its equivalent. And if any of my readers are inclined to possess themselves of the "Snail-way Guide" at the increased price, I do not think they will have any cause to regret the bargain. The beauties of Tunbridge Wells are painted in words, and each syllable is worth its weight in diamonds.

ADVANTAGES OF "THE BEAU OF WATERING-PLACES."

And what are the chief attractions of this "survival of the eighteenth century?" Well, I think I may say "air." The breezes that are wafted across the Common at all times are full of health. You inhale new life and energy as you sit in front of an hotel that boldly announces (on its wall) that it is many hundred feet above the sea level. If the weather is boisterous you can seek the shelter of the valley. Fall to the level of "Ye Pantyles," and you are surrounded on all sides by hills that have been accustomed for centuries to set the winds at utter defiance and to treat the hurricane as a negligible quantity. Even on the hottest day of August there is a breeze on the Common. Then there are the waters that are healing medicines. They are full of iron, so are greatly patronised by those in search of strength or with a preference for water tasting of ink.

As to the hotels and boarding-houses I am not in a position to say much. I stayed once at a capital hostelrie on Mount Ephraim, and believe there are other establishments equally good. I may hint, too, that on Mount Ephraim you can get a charmingly furnished house for about four or five guineas a week.

If you are "a careful tenant" you may get one even for less.

"SOMETHING TO ANTICIPATE AND SOMETHING TO REMEMBER."

My friend Ashby Sterry was right in making his guide a "Snail-Way" specimen. Life in Tunbridge Wells is quiet to a degree. There is a story that the gayer of the inhabitants spent their existence in six months of anticipation of delight and six months in pleasant recollections around the central event of the year's story, the visit of a famous conjuror to the Large Hall. I happened to be staying in the town when this function came off, and can testify to the excitement caused by the display of the portraits of the wonder-worker. Crowds flattened their noses against the shop windows in which these pleasing features were displayed.

Then there is the band daily on "Ye Pantyles," where, for the price of one penny, one can get a chair with a programme of the music thrown in free, gratis, and for nothing. The bandmaster is fond of classical music, and frequently "drops into Handel." When he does, it is not difficult to people the old promenade with persons of the period—Dr. Johnson and Boswell, Steele and Addison, Angelica Kaufmann and Sir Joshua Reynolds; and, of course, my Lord Lovelace and my Lady Bettie Modish, and

all the belles from the Mall and the beaux from the "waiters' coffee-houses." They pace up and down "Ye Pantyles," as you listen with half-closed eyes to the strains of the band. And here, by the way, why not reproduce Tunbridge Wells on the stage? What an excellent "scene" for a theatrical management strong in its painting room!

A RECOLLECTION OF THE LATE DAVID JAMES.

And this reference to the drama reminds me that while I was there I assisted at the performance of *Our Boys* at Tunbridge Wells, in the Large Hall, and had the pleasure of seeing my friend Thomas Thorne in the character rendered famous by David James. I little thought when I was marking the differences between the two readings that I never should look upon the original again. The first time I met David James was after the production of *Ixion* at the Royalty. I had just made the acquaintance of the author of the famous burlesque, and at a dinner at which I was present, given by Frank Marshall to Alfred Wigan, Joseph Robins and Burnand, the latter spoke of the great possibilities of the coming actor. Mr. David James was cast for a comparatively small part, but he played it to the entire satisfaction of a rather exigent author. Mr. Burnand said that from what he had seen of his acting at rehearsal he was sure he would be "very good." And so he was

From his first appearance at the little Royalty he was a favourite with the Press. He played in several of Burnand's burlesques (and they were something like burlesques in those days!), first at Dean Street, Soho, and then at the Strand. He was always excellent. When David James and Thomas Thorne were at the Vaudeville I had a near chance of seeing them in one of my own pieces; they both read it and said they both liked it. They sent for me and told me that they considered it could be cast from the existing company.

"And we should be glad to play it at once," said David James, "had we not given Byron a commission which should be our next production. However, he is very backward with his work, and the third act is not yet delivered. If he doesn't hurry up, and we don't get the act in a fortnight, your piece shall have the preference."

My friend H. J. Byron, however, did "hurry up" and the third act was duly delivered. The piece to which it belonged was *Our Boys*, which ran without stopping for five years! My excellent play (I am afraid it has grown rather old-fashioned) is still tenderly cherished—on my bookshelves!

WHERE TO GO AFTER THE THEATRE.

My "Green-room Recollections" have run away with me and carried me from "Ye Pantyles" to the

Vaudeville Theatre. But if the operation were reversed I am not sure that the experiment would not be successful. I am not quite sure what is being played at the old house at this moment. But tired brains from the play-houses, not only in the Strand but elsewhere, will find Tunbridge Wells a delightful restorative. It is quaint and beautiful, old-fashioned and lovely beyond compare. Above all and before all, it is the very land of health. Invalids revive like drooping flowers thirsting for water on the appearance of a summer shower. There are shops of all sorts and conditions; but during my stay I never noticed the presence of an establishment belonging to an undertaker. And this being so, I venture to raise the appropriate cry of "Tunbridge Wells and its inhabitants for ever!"

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE PARISIAN PART OF THE LONDON DISTRICT.

A CHAPTER or two back I had the pleasure of showing how a trip to Paris could be easily managed within the space of three clear days. It has occurred to me that I might say a little more, once again adopting the theory of the journalists that the French capital is a part of the London district. I will imagine the travelling over. I have braved the passage between England and France and have reached the Gare du Nord after a long and fatiguing railway journey. It is the early morning, and in the coming daylight I can see the well-known hoarding that advertises on the sides of houses the sartorial generosity of the "*bon diable*." Where shall I go? No doubt I have decided already, and have told the sleepy coachman of my voiture to make for the "Grand." If I have been ultra wise I shall have written to the hostelrie in the Boulevards des Capucines and com-

manded my room. It is the safest thing to do. I know of nothing more mortifying than to be sent away from the doors of an hotel on the score that there is no accommodation. You feel rather like my friend Mr. J. L. Molloy's "Vagabond"—"homeless, ragged, and tanned." But the vagrant in the song has this pull over you—he was not encumbered with luggage, and had not to settle up with a sometimes insolent and invariably surly coachman at the end of his peregrinations.

THE CHOICE OF AN HOTEL.

Say that we have decided to stay at the Grand. It unquestionably has its advantages. Its courtyard is certainly a scene of never-ceasing gaiety, and it is said that you have only to seat yourself outside the *salon de lecture* on the terrace to meet "all Paris." Then there is the *table d'hôte* breakfast, which is patronised not only by MM. les Voyageurs but by the natives also. If you partake of this meal with your wife, the course consists of four dishes at choice, to say nothing of *hors d'œuvres*. From a diversified *carte du jour* (including oysters, partridges, mayonnaise d'homard, chateaubriands, and any number of other palatable *plats*) you can, by making a wise selection, secure a meal worthy of a Catullus. And yet there are Goths who sometimes, in reply to the

garçon, announce that for "their first dish they will have boiled eggs, and for the other, eggs and bacon!" Oh, the pity o' it! The pity o' it!

Then there is the reading-room, with its papers and its theatrephones. This last is rather an institution. During the hours of performance you can hear what is going on at the Opéra, the Bouffes, and many other French theatres. By putting fifty centimes in the slot you have the privilege of listening for five minutes, and by inserting a franc the advantage is extended to twice that length of time. I cannot say that I was entirely satisfied with my investment. Once I heard (amidst a whirl) what seemed to me to be the finale of a first act. Then I distinctly made out the clapping, and I transferred the tubes to my better seven-eighths, and she, too, heard the applause. We were greatly pleased at this triumph of civilisation, but came to the conclusion that our assistance of the performance resembled not a little the glimpse of the circus riding obtained by Leech's boy while looking under the tent's canvas. He could see the "'oofs of the 'osses," and so—from a musical point of view—could we!

THE HOTEL DU LOUVRE AND ITS RIVALS.

Of course there are other excellent hotels besides the Grand. There are any number on the Boulevards; along the Rue de Rivoli; in the Rue St.

Honoré. In the days of my youth I used to like the Grand Hotel du Louvre. It still exists, but its ancient site is now occupied by the Magasins, the delight of the ladies and the terror of their remaining "eighths." The other day, when I passed through what used to be the courtyard, I found it full of all sorts of "high novelties." Here were some feather ruffs, there a miscellaneous collection of bonnets all ticketed ten francs a piece, yonder a great bazaar of "voyage articles." I could not help sighing when I thought of the past, and I feel certain that my melancholy would have become chronic had not my better seven-eighths cheered me up by wanting to buy a Franco-Russian fan, an eiderdown quilt, four umbrellas, a trunk, a dozen and a half of blankets, a few hats, some curtains, a gauzy arrangement for the front of the dress "that could be worn with anything," and a dining-room table. We did not purchase all these articles, and those we did I am bound to say we found a nuisance. I put some of the blankets, two of the umbrellas, and the fan in my bundle of coats, and unfortunately these did not seem to agree with my recently polished evening boots and my partially opened sponge-bag. But, of course, you cannot expect everything to go like clockwork when travelling. Still, it must be supposed that a feather fan, representing the Franco-Russian colours, is not improved by the application of escaped boot polish and liberated Odonto.

Leaving the reduced Louvre, we may patronise, if we please, the increased Hotel de Lille et d'Albion. Years ago this was quite a small place, and the original site is now occupied (I fancy) by the Hotel St. James. In its present form it is not bad, still it is "very English." Breakfast is distinctly breakfast, and there is a strong suggestion of "a cut off the joint" in the other meals. Much the same may be said of the Normandie, and if the Continental is not so popular as the Grand, it is because it is at the wrong end of the Avenue de l'Opéra. I have been told by daring tourists that there are good hostelries on the other side of the Seine. I cannot speak from experience, but if all I hear is true, in the Quartier St. Germain there may still be found representatives of the old *noblesse* who, having no houses in Paris, still put up at the ancient inns devoted to their class. Here you will find marquises who do not owe their coronets to chocolate manufactories, and peers of France who can trace their titles beyond the days of Napoleon I.

A NIGHT WITH THE ELECTRIC LIGHT.

And speaking of hotels, I am reminded that it is well to discover the secrets of the electric light before retiring to rest. A friend of mine, weary from much travel, went to bed leaving the lamp in full blast. At 4 a.m. he woke up, and finding the electric light still brilliant, attempted to turn it off. He pushed the

button at his side without any effect. He repeated the pressure several times, and then heard a knock at his door and the sleepy sounds of a human voice. He was asked what he wanted, and then discovered to his surprise, that he had been taking infinite trouble to summon a superfluous waiter! At the Louvre and many other hotels there is an indiarubber bag attached by a tube to the electric lights. You squeeze this bag once, and the chandelier in the centre of the room blazes, a second pressure transfers the light from the centre of the room to the bedside, and a third application puts lights out. The matter is very simple when you know how it is done; but, if you don't, you may imitate the action of my friend and bring forth the early waiter—with results. When you do you had better look out in your conversation book "Dialogue with a would-be murderer," for you will need some of the replies! If you are a theatre-goer, you will find most of the old playhouses occupied by, in fact, old plays; and if you prefer a music-hall, you will see most of the stars from the mother country once again. If you are an artist, you will know your Louvre and your Luxembourg by heart. If you are a musician, you will find the Opéra and Opéra Comique scarcely up to the mark of Covent Garden. And yet, after all, Paris is delightful. You don't want to go anywhere or to do anything. The change of scene should be enough for you.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

A NOVELTY IN LONDON RECREATIONS.

IN my character as a Londoner requiring restoration to health I give another experience. I have written of a short trip to Tunbridge Wells, and a two days' jaunt to Paris. But I have again run down. And when you run down, the best thing to do is to run off.

FROM ST. PAUL'S TO WHITSTABLE.

I will assume, for the sake of argument, that my genial and ever courteous friend, Dr. Farren Farce, has given me a "thorough overhauling," and is looking at me through his confidence-inspiring spectacles.

"You want change of air, pleasant companions, and a wholesome diet." I will suppose my esteemed medical adviser is observing, "See that you get them, dear friend, or I will not answer for the consequences."

After such an (imaginary) decision I have of course only to obey (supposititious) orders. I am living in London, and if I have to obtain change of

air, why not go to Whitstable? I am to indulge in a wholesome diet; why not eat oysters? I am to seek pleasant companions; why not leave myself in the safe hands of a valued friend of mine I will call Trevelyan?

The matter is soon arranged. We (our party is to consist of five) are to leave St. Paul's by the excellent train starting shortly after ten, and reaching Whitstable at about noon. There are faster conveyances than this on the same well-managed line of the S. E. and C. D., but this particular "fixture" suits all our conveniences. It is neither too early nor too late: just the proper moment for starting and arriving. We are not disturbed at our breakfast, and can get to Whitstable just in time for lunch. On our journey down we talk music and the drama, social topics, and law and police. We note the extensive alterations at Bisley, the site-changing castle at Rochester (which first appears on our right, then on our left, and ultimately gets behind us), and the deserted hop-gardens of Kent. The day is delightful. Blue sky and warm sun, with just a tinge of sharpness in the air telling of the approaching autumn. The run down to the coast takes less than no time, and we have scarcely leisure for a game of penny nap before we have reached Whitstable.

Our host is on the platform ready to offer us a

hearty greeting. We quickly detrain, and are soon in the cosy little chaises that seem to be as much natives of the place as the oysters themselves. We rattle through the old-fashioned little town, passing the "Bear and Key," and quickly reach the Steam Packet Hotel.

"What are you looking for?" asks our host good-naturedly, as he notices that I am searching for something or other.

"The representative of the General Steam Navigation Company," I reply. "Does the boat go to Margate or Ramsgate, or has it stopped running for the season?"

"Oh, we have no steamer now," returns my friend. "There used to be a packet that plied between Whitstable and Gravesend, but that was years ago. But we still have a hoy, and in the summer there are worse journeys in the world than a sail from Bishopsgate to within sight of Herne Bay. The hoy makes the trip to London once a week, starts on a Wednesday, and returns on a Sunday."

And then we make our first acquaintance with the oysters.

A RECOLLECTION OF THE DOCKS.

We have entered a large shed, half of which is occupied by tanks. These receptacles are filling with water supplied by the rising tide.

"This is our waiting-room," says our host; "here come all the oysters after they have been brought to the shore by the dredgers, and they are ready for transmission to London."

And as I look down into the depths of the tanks I am reminded of the temporary resting-place of the turtles in a noted "tavern" in the City where "green fat" and punch are the *spécialités de la maison.*

"The last time I went there," I tell my friends as we walk across the rails on our way to a small boat on the shingly shore, "I had been with a tasting order to the docks. We had been a pleasant party—several of the staff of a well-known 'high-class weekly'—and we none of us had felt the influence of the fumes-bearing air of the docks in the least. One of us on his return to the editor called attention to this interesting fact—that in spite of tasting several kinds of sherry and port, and lunching subsequently on turtle, cold roast beef and champagne, he was as right as right could be. The consumption and inhaling of a certain, or rather uncertain amount of alcohol had not affected him in the least."

"And what did the editor say?"

"Well," I reply, "our chief took rather a different view of our colleague's condition, and expressed his opinion that 'he was as tipsy as a fly.' But

then the editor had not been able to join our party, so we put down his estimate of our friend's mental and physical stability to 'nasty jealousy.' Moreover, as the conductor of a 'high-class weekly,' he was bound to adopt a gloomy view of life and its pleasures."

And by this time we have reached the shore and entered the boat that is to take us to the dredger in the offing.

OYSTERS IN CHARMING VARIETY.

I frankly confess that I am more of a landsman than a sailor, so when I see a large cutter making for us and apparently desirous of running us down I am rather alarmed. However, there is really no cause for fear, for the coming vessel is to be our home for the next four hours; it is making for us because it wishes to take us aboard. We clamber up the sides of our new boat, and start for the oyster-beds.

And now that we are really on the ocean I begin to realise the pleasures of the situation. Our boat, although rough and unornamental, is scrupulously clean. We are seated on comfortable deck-chairs and watching lazily the preparations for luncheon. A cloth as white as snow is spread before us, and two of the crew are busily cutting slices of brown

bread and butter and opening bottles of stout and sauterne.

"Do you ever use steam power?" I ask as we pass a perfect fleet of vessels like our own.

"No," says our host; "it would not be possible. You see we move sideways. The wind takes us forward, and we are held back by the dredges. We cover a considerable amount of submerged ground. Had we steam the dredges would be pulled along in single file instead of extended order, as they say in the service."

As a captain of militia (the solitary distinction of which I am really proud) I understand my host's meaning and explain the matter to my companions.

And now we have our first taste of the treasures of the vasty deep. One of the dredges has been drawn up and its shears-like nets opened. Out tumble a number of oysters with two or three five-fingers and a few cockles. The brown bread and butter, the sauterne, and last but not least, a plate of "seconds" are handed round.

"Delicious!" I exclaim, as I devour a bivalve with gusto, "delicious!"

I notice that my friend Trevelyan is like Brer Rabbit, "saying nothing and lying low." But the others are eating with the same satisfaction that I am displaying myself. I am rather horrified when

one of the crew, finding that there are three or four oysters over, throws them into the sea.

"Oh, what waste!" I exclaim.

"There are plenty more where those come from," replies our host with a smile. "Now, these are worth, at the sea shore, about fifteen pence a dozen. In London, however, they are half-a-crown a dozen, or (when mixed with a few natives) four-and-six."

"Can you not do without the middleman?" I ask, struck with the enormous difference between the wholesale price and the retail price.

"It has often been suggested and no doubt some day will come to pass."

And now I understand why Brer Rabbit Trevelyan has been "lying low and saying nothing." Fresh oysters have been brought on board and opened. If the first were delicious, these are supremely delightful. They have a magnificent flavour.

"Yes," says our host, "you are now tasting genuine Whitstable natives. We call these, in honour of our dear and beautiful Danish lady (that was the title we gave her more than twenty years ago, and she still deserves it), the Princess of Wales."

We loyally devour a couple of dozen apiece. Then we pass over another part of the beds, and fresh oysters are produced. They are larger than the others, but of the same splendid flavour.

"These have been ten years in their shells," ex-

plains our host, "and are not to be got except by favour. They are not to be bought—they are not in the market."

As I dispose of two or three splendid specimens, I understand more and more clearly why Brer Rabbit Trevelyan had refused to have anything to do with "seconds."

ALL SORTS AND CONDITIONS OF BIVALVES.

We had started at noon, and now the hands of our watches are nearing four. We are miles and miles away from the shore, and can see on our right the town of Herne Bay and a distant view of the Reculvers. In our rear is Whitstable, with its shipbuilding yards and miniature residential castle. Our keen sea-air-created appetites are beginning to be appeased. It is the time for conversation.

"Those last oysters were ten years in their shells," I surmise. "Dear me! How long does it take before an oyster reaches maturity—is sufficiently grown to be eaten?"

"From four to five years," replies our host. "There are three stages. The first is the appearance of the oyster about the size of a pin's head, then he grows slightly bigger and is the size of a small pea, then he gets to the dimensions of a farthing. He has then to be picked off the native

shell and thrown back into the sea to grow up on his own account."

"Are there good and bad years for oysters?"

"Why, certainly. An expert can almost tell an oyster's age from the flavour, as a connoisseur knows a wine's vintage by the *bouquet*. There have been only three grand years during the present century—one in the twenties, one in 1848, and one in 1893. The year 1899 is also memorable."

I am comforted at this piece of intelligence, considering the sinister rumours that have recently been flying about.

"Did the oysters like the dry and fine weather of the past summer?"

"They revelled in it. They have to be looked after carefully. Some oysters cannot stand the cold, so we take them up by the million and carry them south. We have winter quarters for them off Portsmouth. Then when they are stronger we fetch them back and put them in their other beds at Whitstable."

"Do you feed them?"

"Certainly not; they feed themselves. But there is something peculiar about the waters in these parts. We import large numbers of foreigners and lay them down. But whatever be their nationality on their arrival they soon adopt the flavour of the true Whitstable native. And in this connection let me advise you never to try to feed an oyster. Some people

put bran into the water. A big mistake. Keep a wet cloth at the top of the barrel and drain them daily."

Then we pass a boat that seems to be at the farthest end of the oyster beds.

"Our police," says our host. "The crew come to shore once a week to get provisions. The rest of the time they are on the look-out for trespassers. A number of unscrupulous luggers have to be warned off. As you know, our oyster-beds are strictly preserved."

And now the sun is setting, and we are going home. We hear anecdotes about the five-fingers—how these pests of the ocean cling round oysters and clean them out. The process takes years to accomplish, but they manage the feat at last.

"We get tons of five-fingers. We sell them for manure," says our host, who has been showing us the suckers of these *octopi* in miniature. In calling them octopi I beg to be allowed to forget my Latin, and the number of the creatures' feet.

We talk oyster-shop as we drift along until one of us asks if Wright, the low comedian, did not die at Herne Bay?

"No," returns another of us, who is better informed; "you are thinking of Margate. The poor fellow lost his wits before his life—he died hopelessly insane."

A MEMORY OF WRIGHT, THE LOW COMEDIAN.

I tell my friends that I can just remember Wright when Paul Bedford was his foil and "partner." When Wright disappeared and my friend Mr. J. L. Toole took his place, Paul Bedford acted in a similar capacity to the new low comedian.

"Wright and Paul Bedford had a good time of it in the *Green Bushes*," I observe, "when it was produced at the old Adelphi. Madame Celeste was of course the heroine, and Miss Woolgar, subsequently Mrs. Alfred Mellon, the Irish girl, and Billington (I think) O'Connor. But I know nothing of the rest of the cast. It was written, of course, by John Baldwin Buckstone."

"Yes," says one of us, "he was stock author at the Adelphi when you were a boy. But later on he shared the honours of the proud position with Charles Selby, who wrote *The Poor Strollers*, in which Webster, Billington, Wright, Madame Celeste, and he himself appeared. That was the play in which poor Wright told Billington after a long and noble tirade to be less energetic in his gestures, as his cheap coat was not made with a view to standing the storm and stress of emotional oratory!"

And with pleasant recollections of the past and

genial chat about things in general and nothing in particular we reach the shore.

"THE WAY THE THING IS DONE."

I recall the pleasantest of pleasant little dinners in which our host and his amiable family take a prominent part. Then comes the journey home, enlivened by a game of skill in which an intimate knowledge of spelling is assumed. And then later still the train reaches the Victoria Station, and we prepare to part.

"If any of your medical friends were to see you now," says one of us, as we clasp hands, "they would declare that you look 50 per cent. better than you did this morning."

Quite true, I did look better. Nay, more, I felt better. So I would counsel all Londoners to follow my example. Go to Whitstable at the earliest opportunity, and spend the whole day on a boat eating the choicest oysters. You will find the experience absolutely delightful. And so easy to carry out! All that is requisite is the necessary invitation!

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

LONDON SCHOOLBOYS AT THE END OF THE CENTURY.

AFTER the House is up for the summer recess the platforms of the various London termini are crowded with young gentlemen in high silk hats and Eton jackets. These "fathers of the coming men" are usually in the best of spirits, as they are returning home for the holidays. If they are met by mothers and sisters they are not above bestowing embraces upon their near relatives, but if they happen to be travelling *en garçon* their dignity is tremendous. They give directions to the porters and cabmen with perfect *sangfroid*, and emphasise their commands with the most munificent tips. They know that the time for garnering pocket money has passed, and that at home they will find coffers open for the replenishment of empty purses. So the boys depart for their parents' houses amidst the smiles and blessings of sympathetic railway officials and the town-

bred jehus. But before reaching the platforms most of these lads have been either taking part in or assisting at entertainments of a more or less dramatic character. During the past week the collegians of Stoneyhurst have been performing an operetta, those of Edgbaston a Latin play, and those of St. Augustine's a drama in three acts. Only the other day Harrow had its Speech Day, when limitless amusement was afforded by the croaking of frogs in full evening dress; and Eton commemorated George the Third's birthday with the usual procession of boats and selection of recitations. Westminster does little in the summer, reserving the comedies of Plautus and Terence for the long nights of mid-December.

AMATEUR ACTING AT THE UNIVERSITIES.

I am afraid that I may get into trouble if I suggest that the far-famed "A.D.C." at Cambridge can be counted in the number of juvenile histrionics. I am not forgetful of that capital cut in *Punch*, by the late Charles Keene, which told us that Oxford and Cambridge "men" considered the Eton and Harrow cricket match as "the inter-University contest in miniature." Still the "A.D.C." in my mind, and very likely in the minds of many others, is primarily connected with the school rather than the University.

Mr. F. C. Burnand, its founder, had been immensely fond of theatricals when at Eton, and I believe while at that historical seat of learning managed to get a farce played at the Theatre Royal, Windsor. The renowned editor of *Punch* was the first member to write an original piece for presentation at the "A.D.C.," as another contributor to the *London Charivari,* Mr. R. C. Lehmann, has been the last. Only a short while ago "Jupiter, LL.D." was delighting Town and Gown at Cambridge to the great satisfaction of the Cantabs in general and resident dons in particular. Those who have not read Mr. Burnand's "Recollections of the Cambridge A.D.C." should get the book at once and study it. The volume is full of amusing stories, and serves as a record of the members of the famous society to the date of publication. The history of the "A.D.C." is traced from the early days when Mr. Burnand thought of calling the late Mr. Maddison Morton's celebrated farce *Box και Cox* (to give it a Greek flavour for the readier acceptance of the Vice Chancellor) to the time when H.R.H. the Prince of Wales was present at the club's jubilee. It would be a good thing if the eminent author would consent to issue a new edition of his admirable work, bringing his "Recollections" up to date. Much has happened since the days when "Charlie Hall" was the best of stage managers, and "C. R. Carrington" the most

amusing of burlesquers. Only the other day I saw these talented members of the best of clubs standing in front of their president at the state opening of the Tower Bridge. One of the two was Recorder of London, and the other Lord Chamberlain. But the A.D.C. has not only been a stepping-stone to the Bench and the Senate, but also to the run of the professional boards. A glance at the theatrical programmes a few weeks before the London dramatic season had come to an abrupt conclusion would have revealed a number of names well known on the banks of the Cam. To select a couple out of a dozen, I may mention Messrs. Brookfield and Elliott. Oxford has not been quite so famous in histrionics as the sister university. For some time there was a club called "The Shooting Stars," but it ultimately vanished (like its namesakes) into space. However, recently, thanks amongst other causes to the efforts of Mr. Henry Irving the younger, the Oxford Amateur Dramatic Club has obtained considerable popularity. But it will take a long while before any society attains the success of the A.D.C. "Burnand's Creation" was never more prosperous. May its future be as pleasant as its present and its past.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE POWERS THAT ARE.

To come to the entertainments of a scholastic "breaking up." The powers that are have a very

heavy responsibility. They should realise that in their hands are at least three hours of valuable time. A father must be very hard-hearted if he refuses (without really valid excuse) to be present at the performances of one of his own sons. Paterfamilias gets an earnest request from Primus or Secundus, or possibly Tertius, begging him to assist at his "breaking up." Materfamilias has not only already consented but settled the costume she proposes to wear on the auspicious occasion. The female influence (filially instigated) is exercised, and Paterfamilias determines to run down. This often occurs, and consequently the powers that are have at their mercy a number of anxious and busy men. They should treat these men kindly. They should do their best to make the entertainment for those men as little tedious as possible. It is their duty.

I speak feelingly, for I have myself been at times induced to assist at "breaking-ups." Not very long ago I was persuaded to travel over a hundred miles to be present at an amateur performance in which a young hopeful in whom I take the deepest possible interest sustained a part. I arrived rather late, and was met at the door of the temporary theatre by my juvenile entertainer in full costume.

"What! are you not wanted on the stage?" I asked.

"Oh dear no, not for hours. I don't appear until the second act."

"And what do you do then?"

"I appear as a waiter."

"Have you much to say?" I queried.

"Well, no," was the reply. "Not much, at least not very much. I answer 'Yes, sir,' twice, and then go out!"

And I had made the journey to see this! However, it is only just to add that the waiter, when played, was quite a success. Nothing could have been better than the "go out."

THE NECESSITY OF CAREFUL REHEARSAL.

And the attention I expended upon watching the progress of this small part made me consider the question of rehearsals in general and rehearsals of school theatricals in particular. It is some years since I rehearsed a piece of my own, and possibly matters may have mended of late. But in the fairly far away "long ago," actors and actresses having "got their words and their crossings," allowed matters to drift until the hour of performance. It was assumed that "everything would be right at night." The result of this system was this—the premier, when the Press and the critical public were present, became nothing more nor less than a dress

rehearsal. Naturally, a new piece was heavily handicapped by the unpreparedness of all concerned. Until about the fourth representation it was imperfectly performed. These things are better managed in Paris. On the Continent a play is most carefully rehearsed. All the actors and actresses (principals included) play at rehearsal exactly as they intend to play at night. As related when Charles Mathews took *Cool as a Cucumber* to the French capital in the translated form of *L'Anglais Timide,* he was surprised to find that a rehearsal was played with as much care as a public representation. As I have said the French were equally astonished to see the great comedian walking through his part as if he had just received his scrip and had never seen his companions before. However, in the case of Charles Mathews the younger it *was* all right at night. But the fact should not be accepted as the foundation for a precedent by amateurs.

DR. LIDDEL AT WESTMINSTER.

When Dr. Liddel was headmaster at St. Peter's College he was in the habit of superintending the rehearsals of the Westminster Play. A story is told against him that when one of his pupils had to simulate intoxication, he proposed that the amateur should "suggest drunkenness without losing dignity."

"You are a Roman," Dr. Liddel is reported to have observed, "and a Roman never forgets his position, even when enslaved by the too potent contents of the wine cup."

In those distant days there used, I believe, to be a beverage called "dog's nose" behind the scenes at Westminster, and the would-be reveller drank deeply —too deeply—of this stimulant to keep up his courage. As a consequence, when he appeared in the drunken scene the performance was remarkably realistic, but scarcely redolent of "classical dignity." So the story goes. No doubt the tale properly belongs to the collection of Benjamin Trovato.

An amateur actor, who still adorns the boards—but now on rare occasions—was accustomed to take his directions from Dr. Liddel with adequate respect, and then play his part at night after the model of the late Mr. Wright and the present Mr. Toole. My friend the waiter the other day gave a particularly original rendering of his part.

"Did you do *that* at rehearsal?" I asked, referring to one of his "points."

"Oh, dear no," was the reply, "I kept it for the performance."

It was rather a dangerous expedient, but on the occasion to which I refer success attended the experiment. It was one of those rare instances where the end justified the means.

FOR THE DEFENCE.

A school entertainment should not be too long. If the boys must recite, let them confine themselves to less than a hundred lines. If a piece is selected for performance, a farce in a single scene is frequently more effective than a comedy in five acts. Costume plays are better than dramas of the day. A lad feels less shy if he is "dressed up," and it is easier to accept feeble acting if it is supposed to suggest the manners and customs of the "long ago." If a play has no female characters so much the better, as, in spite of classical precedents, a lad appearing as a lady is never entirely satisfactory. And in this connection I may observe that pieces have been written with a view to excluding the softer (or should I say harder?) sex. It is better for the powers that are to secure such a play rather than to trust to their editing of "Hamlet" with a view to the exclusion of Gertrude and Ophelia.

In conclusion, perhaps the best reason for the continuance of school representations may be found in the following dialogue, which took place between myself and my young friend only a day or so ago:—

"Did you enjoy yourself in front?" asked the lad.

"Oh, immensely."

"And so did we behind the curtain. I wouldn't

have missed it for worlds. And I am so glad you saw it."

And in this assurance I found ample compensation for disturbance.

Let me hope that my readers, lured away from more serious matters by my "gossip," will be able to say the like of my Sketches of London at the End of the Century.

THE END.

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